

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only

received

date entered

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

1. Name

historic John Corbly Farm (portion)

and/or common Slave Gallant (portion)

2. Location

street & number Pennsylvania State Route 30027,  
4000 ft. N of Garard's Fort, PA

not for publication

city, town Greene Township vicinity of

state Pennsylvania code county Greene code

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 type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input 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 Ray Hunsaker

street & number P.O. Box 395

city, town Carmichael vicinity of state Pennsylvania

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Greene County Courthouse

street & number High and Church Streets

city, town Waynesburg state Pennsylvania

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records

# 7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one	
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site	date <u>1964</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved	
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed			

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

The nominated property includes a brick house located about 100 feet east of Pennsylvania State Route 30027 on a gently sloping hillside, a well with hand pump located north of the house, wood fencing surrounding various portions of the property, and a collection of frame outbuildings in the immediate vicinity of the house. The outbuildings including a small barn, outhouse, kitchen or washhouse, and two additional structures-- represent the use of the property over time and currently form a single physical and visual unit with the house. They date, however, from a more recent period than the house and have no bearing on the house's architectural integrity or its association with John Corbly.

The house, dating from the turn-of-the-nineteenth-century, is a two-story, five bay structure on a regularly coursed stone foundation. A standing-seam metal roof with two chimneys is gabled parallel to the facade. The facade and north gable end of the house are brick laid in Flemish bond; the south gable end was also of original Flemish bond construction but has been largely rebuilt in common bond brick within the past twenty years due to a major structural problem. At the rear of the house, the three northern bays are of common bond brick, while the two southern bays are clad in overlap weatherboards, apparently enclosing a former two-level porch.

The symmetrical west facade has doorways with narrow transoms and stone sills and steps at the 2nd and 4th bays. All windows are of small rectangular dimensions with two-over-two double hung sash and stone sills. The three first floor windows and one of the doors have flaring brick flat arches of Georgian aspect, but brick over first floor openings has been painted white to resemble lintels. The remaining door has a replacement lintel. The uppermost brick course of the facade is a sequence of header bricks which are set at a forty-five degree angle to produce a denticulate effect below the simple cornice.

Gable end elevations each have two small square attic-level windows. The south elevation has an additional sash window at the eastern end of the first floor. The symmetrical fenestration pattern of the facade is largely repeated at the rear with a central entry in the brick portion and an entry in the interior bay of the frame portion sheltered by an undistinguished frame porch. The second floor of the frame section, however, lacks a second window for exact symmetry. Windows of the frame section are double hung sash, six over six.

The first floor of the interior consists of a broad central "hall" extending the entire depth of the house, with two chambers opening from it to the north, and a front parlor opening from it to the south. The hall and parlor are defined by masonry walls covered with plaster. The chambers are separated by a board partition. The framed-in former porch area, now a kitchen partially finished in modern materials, opens from the rear of the parlor. See floor plan.

The hall features a narrow fully-enclosed staircase to the second floor at the southeastern corner which pivots twice along the interior wall. A stairway beneath provides access to the basement which only occupies the area underneath the hall. The hall mantelpiece, not original, is of distinctly Victorian styling with Gothic overtones. The chambers have matching Classical mantelpieces, the most significant of the house, with shouldered surrounds, abstract columnar motifs and thin reedy moldings. Each chamber mantelpiece is flanked by built-in cupboards and wood paneling.

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The second floor plan echoes the first floor plan. The second floor central hall has its original Classical mantelpiece, but the flue is currently capped below the roof. The chambers do not have fireplaces; built-in cupboards and wood paneling here flank a section of plastered wall. The flues from the first floor chamber fireplaces rise behind these wall sections and then join at the attic level to form a single exterior chimney.

The house interior features four to five inch board floors, five to six inch board ceilings, chairrails, thin cornice moldings and door and window surrounds, and six-panel wood doors throughout. Although some portions of the house, particularly on the second floor, are in disrepair, the majority of the original woodwork is remarkably intact.

Aside from kitchen facilities, the house has no plumbing or heating. The enclosure of the rear porch, a significant alteration, occurred at an early date as shown by the over six windows. The replacement of exterior doors and the necessary re-bricking of the south wall are the major recent alterations.

# 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 checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1796 Builder/Architect N/A

## Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The house is significant as a well-preserved example of a provincial early American house type--the late eighteenth century Western Pennsylvania brick farmhouse. The virtually intact interior is of particular rarity. The house is further significant as the residence of a colorful personality who played important roles in the area's early religious and secular life. Nearly every Baptist Church in the region cites John Corbly as a founder. He also fulfilled a series of prominent public service responsibilities. The life of the Reverend John Corbly is deeply embedded in local history, and his house stands as a memorial to his enduring name.

The Reverend John Corbly migrated to northwestern Virginia, now southwestern Pennsylvania, in about 1769. Corbly gained possession of the Conrad Sykes claim in 1771, signing a purchase agreement for the property in 1772. He obtained a warrant from the state of Pennsylvania for the 431 acre property in 1785, and a land patent in 1788. As was customary, the patent was given a name: Slave Gallant. The origin of the name is unknown.

Corbly apparently built a log house on the property shortly after its acquisition. Tax records indicate "a house built" beginning in 1796. This is believed to refer to the current brick house, built from clay taken out of the cutting in the embankment where the house now stands. The 1796 date is inscribed on a brick near the south corner of the facade, but it is unclear whether this inscription was an original feature.

The house is a well-preserved example of the early southwestern Pennsylvania brick farmhouse characterized by a two story height, five-bay facade, and gabled roof with interior end chimneys. The exterior exhibits vestiges of Georgian styling in its Flemish bond brickwork, flaring flat arches and denticulate cornice; and the virtually intact 1796 interior displays Classically derived moldings and fireplace mantels. Both the dual entry facade and the assymetrical floor plan with expansive central hall belie the house's vernacular origins and distinguish it from the typical central-entry assymetrical-plan house of the period. The plan is a byproduct of vernacular house-building modes in which a large hall, with fireplace and stairway, is the principal domestic space.

John Corbly (1733-1803) came from England to America in 1747, and settled in Virginia four years later. Shortly thereafter, he was converted to the Baptist faith by Elder John Garard and became an ardent and successful preacher. He was such a fiery speaker and controversial figure that he was arrested in 1768 for preaching seditious doctrines and disturbing the peace. He was, however, acquitted of the charges and licensed to preach.

Corbly relocated in about 1769 to that part of Virginia which later became Greenbush County, Pennsylvania, and assumed new responsibilities. In 1771, he conducted services as an unordained minister at Goshen Church, Garard's Fort, within a mile of his new

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occupied farm. He was ordained a Baptist minister in 1775, and called to the Garard' Fort church as pastor. The church, then the largest and most influential Baptist church in the region, was later renamed the John Corbly Memorial Baptist Church.

John Corbly became an important regional leader in the Baptist Church. He organized the Redstone Baptist Association (Laurel Hill, Patterson Creek, Ten Mile, and Goshen churches) in 1776 and initiated or helped to initiate nearly thirty Baptist churches in the present-day Washington and Greene Counties of Pennsylvania and in West Virginia. He also conducted worship services at numerous frontier forts and other locations. He was paid for his labors only after 1785. He presumably supported his family by farming "Slave Gallant."

Corbly was also an active and prominent man in secular affairs. He was commissioned a Justice of the Peace by Virginia governor Patrick Henry in 1776, and enforced martial law during a Tory uprising. He was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates representing the newly-formed Monongahela County in the same year. During 1779-1780, he served with the Revolutionary War defense of Louisville, Kentucky as a scout and chaplain.

From 1787 to 1790, Corbly was a trustee of Washington Academy (now Washington and Jefferson College). His appointment to serve a Presbyterian academy indicates his rank among churchmen of other denominations. Corbly was appointed to his final public position, coroner of Greene County, in 1801.

Despite his prominence, John Corbly's life in newly-settled territory was not without personal hardship. His second wife and three of his children were killed and two other children were scalped by Indians in a massacre near the Corbly homestead in 1782, a drama much-noted in local lore. In 1794, Corbly was mistakenly arrested and jailed during the local turmoil of the Whiskey Rebellion. He was acquitted without trial the next year.

The Reverend John Corbly died in 1803 while conducting a worship service in his brick house near Garard's Fort. The house and farm remained in the Corbly family until 1837.

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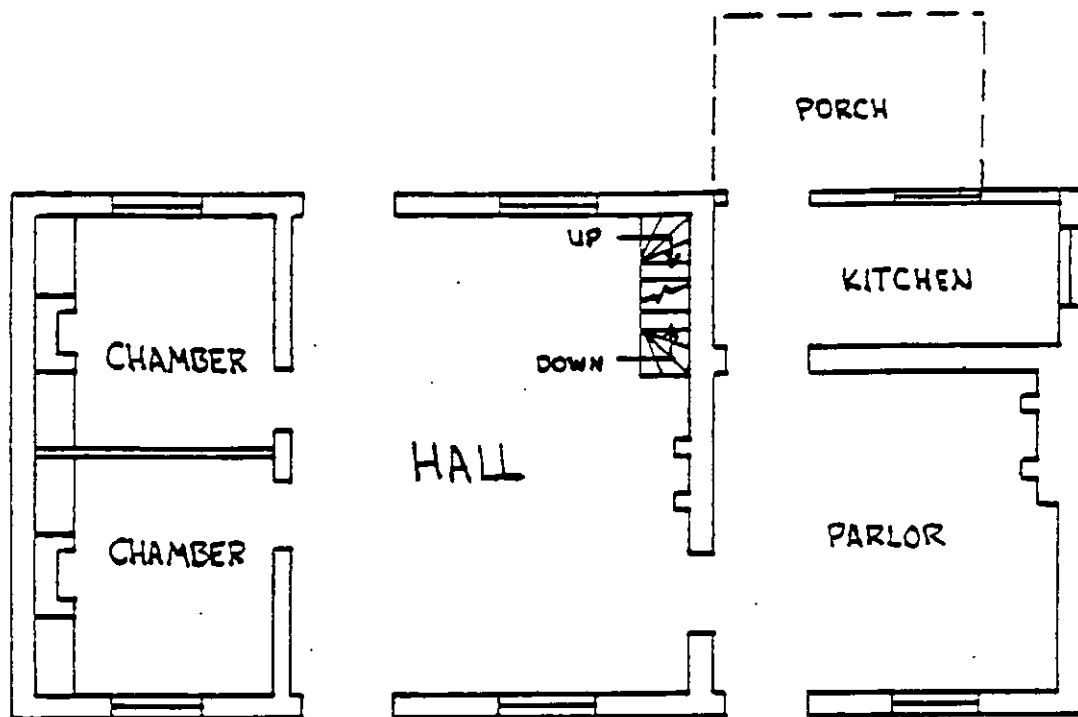
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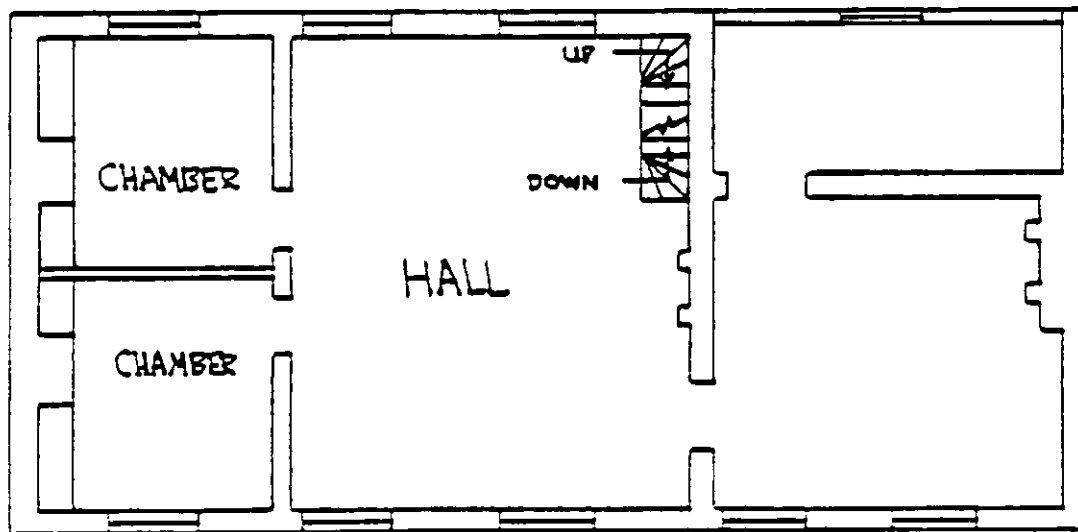
Fordyce, Nannie L. and Leola Wright Murphy. "The Life and Times of Reverend John Corbly and the John Corbly Family Genealogy." Knightstown, Indiana: Mayhill Publications, 1970 (second edition).

Stotz, Charles Morse. The Early Architecture of Western Pennsylvania: A Record of Building Before 1860. New York: W. Helburn, Inc. for the Buhl Foundation, 1936

Waychoff, Andrew J. Local History. Waynesburg, PA: The Democrat Messenger, c.1929.



FIRST FLOOR



SECOND FLOOR

JOHN CORBLY HOUSE  
GREENE COUNTY, PA.  
SEPTEMBER 1983

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then proceed 100 feet southerly to the point of origin. Boundary is inclusive of fenced-in area, outbuildings and well in the immediate vicinity of house, as requested by John Corbly Descendents Association which sponsored this nomination.



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John Corbley Farm Greene Twp., Greene Co. (Added Information)

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Added Criterion: Criterion B  
Significant Person: Corbley, John  
Added Area of Significance: Politics/Government

The current John Corbley National Register nomination does not discuss in detail Corbley's significance in association with the Whiskey Rebellion. The Corbley Farm was listed on the National Register in 1984. The areas of significance were architecture and religion.

Although few names of whiskey rebels were found for the area which became Greene County, Rev. John Corbley was a name known throughout the southwestern Pennsylvania region. In fact, he was one of the best known of the eighteen prisoners taken from the region. A Baptist minister, he was arrested and taken to Philadelphia. Like fellow Baptist minister, David Phillips, Corbley's field of work was also in economically developed neighborhoods which were involved in the Rebellion. He was arrested for being "traitorously assembled" at Braddock's Field and for "confederating to raise an insurrection." (1)

Noted as a very effective preacher, Corbley was an ardent patriot and preached political freedom as the counterpart of an untrammelled liberty of conscience. Evidently, he provoked the disfavor of certain persons who reported him as an aider and abettor of the Rebellion. Men like Corbley were arrested to be used as examples whose trial and execution for treason would deter other disaffected citizens from plotting rebellion.

During the Revolutionary War, Rev. Corbley was a justice of the peace for Virginia. It was his job to march arrested Tories to Winchester, Virginia. He marched them by slow marches so that the prisoners had time to meditate and repent their wrongs. He was opposed to a man's losing his life for a "mere error in judgement." (2)

In May, 1782 Corbley's family was massacred near Garard's Fort by a small band of Indians. Corbley deep in meditation, was following a distance behind his young family on their way to church early one Sunday morning. His wife, baby, and two small children were killed and scalped. Two other daughters were scalped but survived. Corbley himself was unhurt. Corbley's experience with the Indians went to the heart of the issue that the central government was impotent in dealing with frontier problems, yet demanded internal taxes. Similarly, other frontiersmen lived in fear of Indian attacks. It was obvious to these people that they should be exempt from additional burdens, especially federal taxes. (3)

Corbley represented Greene Township at the Parkinson's Ferry Meeting on August 14, 1794. In a report from the United States Commissioners to the Secretary of State, Corbley was noted as among those who wanted to renounce all connection with the government and maintain opposition by violence. He reputedly declared to

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John Corbley Farm Greene Twp., Greene Co. (Added Information)

Section number 8 Page 3

meeting members, "that it was too humiliating to offer any further petitions or remonstrances to Congress." (4)

The United States Commissioners wrote Secretary Alexander Hamilton on August 30, 1794 after the meeting at Redstone Old Fort about the proceedings there. "The committee of conference were charged with being bribed by us. A new committee is appointed. As they meet within the time fixed we are disposed to hear them though we are apprehensive that little good will result from it. Among them are some of the men most violent for resistance particularly Corbley and Phillips, two Baptist preachers." (5)

Corbley was among those arrested by Capt. Dunlap's Company on November 13, 1794, known as the "Dreadful Night." Corbley was first taken to Washington jail, then to Pittsburgh, and finally imprisoned in Philadelphia in December. On the journey, he was elected chaplain of the group. He was detained until March 15th, without a hearing, but was allowed the privilege of the city. When he was paroled, he returned to Greene County on foot and returned likewise in May for his trial. (6)

Records of the Goshen Baptist Church show that Corbley's involvement in the Whiskey Rebellion did not bring censure from his church. During this period his name continues among those "Messengers for the Association." (7)

Although a 1984 nomination and a commemorative plaque on the front of Corbley House states that it was built in 1796, the 1798 federal tax for Greene Township notes Corbley with a house measuring 25 X 30 feet (probably of logs according to its value), a barn, and a milk house on 300 acres. The will of Corbley indicates that he was quite a large landholder. He designated lots in Waynesburg and Greensboro, and tracts in Greene County and Fayette County, Pennsylvania, in Virginia, and Kentucky to his children.

The Federalist government saw men like Corbley---highly visible and vocal men---as threats to the order of the nation. Therefore, they sought to silence them on charges which appear unsubstantiated now. Men like Corbley saw themselves as defending the same rights, that of free speech and assembly, as had been fought for almost twenty years previously.

(1) Dorothy E. Fennell, "From Rebelliousness to Insurrection: A Social History of the Whiskey Rebellion, 1765-1802" Ph. D. dissertation, University of Pittsburgh, 1981 p. 93. Microfilm M986 Reel 1, Criminal Case files of the U.S. Circuit Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, 1791-1840, Roll 1, Case Files, 1791-1799 U. S. vs. John Corbley, March 4, 1795

(2) Nannie L. Fordyce, Life and Times of Rev. John Corbly and Genealogy (Washington, Pa.: published by compiler), pp. 18-19.

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John Corbley Farm Greene Twp., Greene Co. (Added Information)

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(3) Samuel P. Bates, History of Greene County, Pennsylvania (Chicago: Nelson, Rishforth & Co., 1888), pp. 508-509. Thomas P. Slaughter, The Whiskey Insurrection: Frontier Epilogue to the American Revolution (New York & Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), pp. 93-95.

(4) Pennsylvania Whiskey Rebellion Collection, 1792-96 MS 16,804 Libray of Congress, 1976, Letter August 17, 1794 United States Commissioners to Alexander Hamilton

(5) Pennsylvania Whiskey Rebellion Collection, Letter August 30, 1794 James Ross, Jasper Yeates and William Bradford to Alexander Hamilton

(6) Fordyce, p. 34.

(7) Records of the Goshen Baptist Church on Big Whiteley Creek, Greene County, Pennsylvania, pp. 30-31.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Bates, Samuel P. History of Greene County, Pennsylvania. Chicago: Nelson, Rishforth & Company, 1888.

Evans, L.K. Pioneer History of Green County, Pennsylvania. Waynesburg, PA: Waynesburg Republican, 1941. (cont.)

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .79

Quadrangle name Garard's Fort

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 

1	7	5	8	3	3	8	0	4	4	0	8	6	5	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

Beginning at the 0/40 mile marker on the eastern edge of Pennsylvania State Route 30027 north of Garard's Fort, proceed 120 feet southerly along road; then proceed 145 feet easterly, 220 feet northerly and 145 feet westerly to the eastern edge of Route 30027;-(cont.)

## 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            code            county            code           

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Martin Aurand Survey Assistant

organization Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation date October, 1983

street & number One Landmarks Square telephone 412/322-1204

city or town Pittsburgh 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 National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature Larry E. Tise

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 3/22/84

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

