

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

JAN 19 1988

# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

HISTORIC PRESERVATION

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

### 1. Name of Property

historic name BELMONT  
other names/site number n/a

### 2. Location

street & number 3779 Bristol Road  not for publication  
city, town Bensalem  vicinity  
state PA code 042 county Bucks code 017 zip code 19020

### 3. Classification

<b>Ownership of Property</b>	<b>Category of Property</b>	<b>Number of Resources within Property</b>	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<b>Contributing</b>	<b>Noncontributing</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
		<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: n/a  
Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

### 4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this  nomination  request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
 Brent Glass, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property  meets  does not meet the National Register criteria.  See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
State or Federal agency and bureau

### 5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.  
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register.  See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain): \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of the Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date of Action \_\_\_\_\_

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic / Single Dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic / Single Dwelling

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)

Mid-19th Century / Greek Revival

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stucco

walls Stucco

roof Slate

other Wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Belmont is a large circa 1850, stuccoed masonry, two and three quarter story, Greek Revival house surmounted by a slate, hip roof. The house is L-shaped and has two primary two and three quarters story, five bay facades of matching design which meet at the south corner of the house, making the house seem much larger than it actually is. A wide veranda protects the first story of the main elevation (southwestern) and a portion of the other major elevation (southeastern). The southeastern facade is extended by a two story masonry and clapboard kitchen wing added in the nineteenth century. Belmont is located along heavily travelled Bristol Road in Bensalem Township. While the house was traditionally associated with a 146 acre farm, it is currently situated on a three acre lot surrounded on three sides by a twentieth century housing development. A large regional shopping mall is located on the opposite side of Bristol Road. However, the building's location on a rise, its setback from the road, and its large lot with mature trees and extensive shrubbery still provides an appropriate setting. The property has a number of outbuilding ruins to the rear of the mansion, but since their construction date and relationship to the main house have not been proven, they are not included in the nomination.

An example of the Greek Revival form, Belmont is bold in silhouette, broad in proportions, and simplified in details. The roof has small brick interior end chimneys at the northwest, southeast, and northeast ends. The chimney on the southeast end has an octagonal, terra cotta chimney pot. The cornice is a relatively simple molded boxed cornice without the highly ornamented frieze associated with high style Greek Revival architecture. Instead, there is a pronounced drip course above the second floor windows. The area between the cornice and the dripcourse is punctured by regularly spaced horizontal four light casement frieze windows on the two main facades to form a simple frieze.

The first floor on the main (southwest) facade of the house has a central wide entranceway with a transom and shouldered architrave trim and double doors. There are four large 6/6 sash windows on the first floor. The second floor has five 6/6 windows which are smaller than those on the first floor. Located directly above the lower windows, above a pronounced dripcourse, are the five four light casement frieze windows. A low pitched hip porch with simple Doric columns spans the main facade and wraps around far enough to service a doorway on the southeast facade of the rear wing. The southeast wing windows match those found on the southwest facade in size and location. Although also having a transom and being ornamented by a frame with shouldered architrave trim, the doorway on this facade is smaller than the one on the southwest wing. It has only a single, standard width door and a three light transom.

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Belmont, Bensalem Township, Bucks Co.

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Attached to the northeast end of the two and three quarter story rear wing that forms a portion of the main house is a two story, four bay, gable roof section. The cornice of this section matches the cornice of the main building. The first story of this section is masonry and matches the main sections of the house. The second story and gable are clapboard. The fenestration on the first floor main elevation of this section is irregular. The outer two bays have recessed doorways with simple lintels. The interior two bays consist of a double 6/6 sash and a single 6/6 sash window. There is no evidence visible to determine if this was the original pattern. The second floor has a regular four bay appearance with four 6/6 sash windows with louvered blinds.

The rear facades of both the main wings do not have regular fenestration. The rear of the main (southwest) facade has three visible bays with the doorway in the bay nearest to where the other wing attaches to this wing. Three second floor windows are located directly above these bays. The third floor has 3/3 sash windows in the outer two bays of the rear side of the southwestern wing. The rear of the southeastern wing has two 6/6 windows on the first floor, a single 6/6 window on the second floor and a single 3/3 on the third floor. The rear of the kitchen wing is of a three bay design with a central door. All windows are of 6/6 design. The second story windows have louvered blinds.

Belmont is of central hall design. The central hall contains the house's main stairway. The main staircase does not go to the third floor. It is a dogleg design with a curved handrail wrapping around the landing and continuing to the top of the stairs and across the small second floor open hallway. On the first floor, to the northwest of the central hall, is a single parlor spanning the entire depth of the house. The fireplace in this parlor has a rather flat profile with simple square pilasters. On the southeast side of the central hallway on the main floor, the front room does not span the entire depth of the house. Since there is no wall between the two units forming the L-shaped house, the rear room on this side of the stairhall is incorporated into a very large room encompassing the remaining portion of the front section and all of the main portion of the rear wing. Since the second floor also reflects this design, this arrangement appears to be part of the original plan. There is a built-in, glass front cupboard in the outside wall of this rear first floor room that appears to be original.

In addition to the main stairs, there is a second, service stairway along the northwesterly wall of the large rear room. It reaches the second floor at the rear of the main block. A long hallway, with a small, curved sided closet near the head of the stairs, leads back along the stairway providing access to the second floor rooms along the southeast facade. The space above the northwest parlor is divided into front and back bedrooms. On the southwest side of the partitions are two closets, one servicing each room. The closet closest to the room entrance has a curved end, similar to the hall closet, to facilitate entry into the room. The third floor, with the exception of the northeast corner, is completely open. The northeast corner has been closed in with simple board partitions. The interior of the rear two story extension has plain plastered walls.

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The interior of the house is not highly ornamented. The interior walls are plastered and there are no interior cornices. Panelling is virtually non-existent. The moldings of the door surrounds and fireplaces have a wide, flat profile of the Greek Revival style, and is almost the only element that carries the Greek Revival styling of the exterior, and all of the windows in the house have curved plastered reveals rather than ornate frames.

The first and second floors have thin, regular floorboards. The floorboards on the third floor are wider than those on the more public areas.

The major alterations to the building include excavation of the basement to make it more usable, the installation of a bathroom on the second floor, the removal of shutters and fretwork from the third floor windows, and the residing to the second story of the rear kitchen wing. The only documented changes have been made since the property's purchase by the present owner in late 1985. The bathroom on the second floor was put in a small already existing room. While the interior of this single room has been completely altered, these changes are minor in comparison to the overall integrity of the building and collectively do not detract from the nineteenth century appearance of the building. The remainder of the work done to the building has been the correction of problems caused by deferred routine maintenance.

**8. Statement of Significance**

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally     statewide     locally

Applicable National Register Criteria     A     B     C     D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)     A     B     C     D     E     F     G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)  
Architecture

Period of Significance  
c. 1850

Significant Dates  
c. 1850

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Cultural Affiliation

n/a

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Person

n/a

Architect/Builder

unknown

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

Belmont's significance is in the area of architecture. It is an important representative of the adoption of a nationally popular style in Bucks County. It is one of only a few purely Greek Revival style homes in lower Bucks County. In styling it represents a middle ground between vernacular houses with Greek revival details in Bucks County and Andalusia, Bucks County's ornate Greek revival style landmark.

Belmont is a blend between vernacular and urbane design. The house looks more like a free standing townhouse rather than a rural farmhouse. Most Greek Revival vernacular buildings in lower Bucks County represent traditional gable roof buildings with Greek Revival ornamentation. Unlike the large number of buildings that exhibit mere Greek Revival details, Belmont was built as a Greek Revival house. Belmont has the clean lines, large windows, and the low pitched hip roof of the Greek Revival style that make it stand out from other period buildings. The majority of buildings that present a similar two and three quarter story facade are additive in nature, and none has the L-shaped hipped roof that makes Belmont distinctive. While there are other examples of vernacular Greek Revival buildings in central Bucks County, it is unclear why this style did not spread in the lower part of the county. For whatever reason Belmont is the only pure example of a residence built in this style in lower Bucks County.

At first glance, the house bears a striking resemblance to Trevoise, the Growden-Galloway mansion, located approximately three quarters of a mile to the east (listed in the National Register May 24, 1975). However, Trevoise is a full two pile building with an added third story. The Trevoise mansion dates to the eighteenth century and was extensively remodelled about the same time Belmont was constructed.

In terms of architecture, Belmont cannot be considered in the same category as the Greek Revival landmark, Andalusia, also located in Bensalem Township. Andalusia, one of the earliest Greek Revival buildings in the County, also represents an earlier building with later Greek Revival additions. It was constructed by Nicholas Biddle, a man of national stature and importance. Belmont was constructed by someone of local prominence using plans and designs that appear to be taken from a builder's guide book, rather than designed by a noted architect. The temple front style of Greek Revival architecture did not flourish in rural areas of the Delaware valley. This may be because conservative Quakers and other sectarians did not readily accept homes that resembled temples.

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Belmont, Bensalem Township, Bucks Co.

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To date, little information has been uncovered about Belmont's first owner, Paul Townsend. It is known from a family genealogy that he operated a mill along the Poquessing Creek, near Mechanicsville (now part of Philadelphia), known as Townsend's Mill that had formerly been operated by his father, grandfather, and great grandfather. After his marriage in 1839, he took up residence on the farm of his father-in-law Samuel Jones, on the road leading from the Poquessing Creek to the Growden-Galloway farm, in Bensalem Township. After farming that property for a few years he purchased the Belmont property. The genealogy states that the first year after his purchase of the property, Townsend dug a cellar for the mansion house "roofed it over and brought his family there to live while he and his assistants hewed the timber from the woods for the remainder of the house, the barn and other buildings". Attributing the house to Townsend is supported by the fact that in a newspaper advertisement dated October 13, 1847, the property was described as having no buildings on it. Townsend owned the property until his death in 1890.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Bucks County Intelligencer newspaper, Doylestown, PA, Wednesday, October 13, 1847; page 1, column 4.

Brandywine Conservancy,, Protecting Historic Properties: A Guide to Research and Preservation, 1984. Chadds Ford, PA.

Milner, John Associates, Inc., "Trevose, The Growden Mansion. A Multidisciplinary Study of the Origins and Evolution of Trevose, Bensalem Township, Pennsylvania" prepared for the Bensalem Board of Supervisors, May 1983; pages 106 to 110.

Rifkind,, Carole. A Field Guide to American Architecture New York; New American Library, 1980; pages 38 and 39.

Townsend, Marion Paxson, Ancestry of Arthur Paul Townsend, Langhorne, PA, 1939; page 13.

See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 0.1 acre

UTM References

A 1, 8 | 5, 0, 4, 1, 4, 0 | 4, 4, 4, 3, 1, 8, 0  
 Zone Easting Northing

C \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_

B \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_  
 Zone Easting Northing

D \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_ | \_\_\_\_\_

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

Beginning at a point located approximately 80 feet northeasterly of the northeasterly side of Bristol Road LR 09006 laid out perpendicularly from a point on the northeasterly side of Bristol Road located approximately 130 feet southeasterly of the intersection of the aforementioned Bristol Road and Summit Lane: Thence northeasterly approximately 90 feet; thence northwesterly approximately 60 feet; thence southwesterly approximately 90 feet; thence southeasterly 60 feet to the place of beginning.

See continuation sheet

**Boundary Justification**

The boundaries of the nominated resource are delineated to form a rectangle around the nominated building and to exclude the remaining acreage. The excluded remaining acreage is a large wooded lot that does not contribute to the house's architectural significance. A number of outbuilding ruins to the rear of the house have been excluded since their construction date and relationship to the house are unknown.

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Jeffrey L. Marshall, Director - Historic Preservation

organization Bucks County Conservancy date \_\_\_\_\_

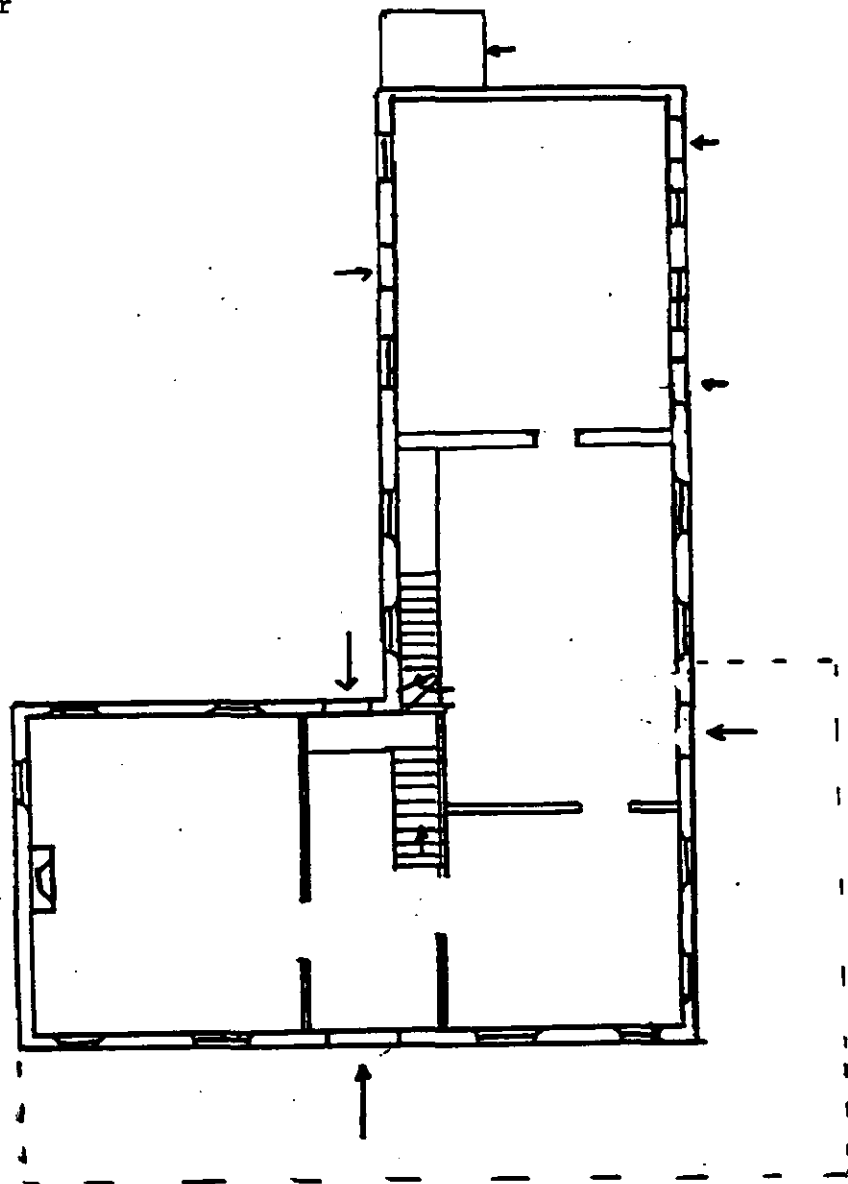
street & number 11 North Main Street telephone (215) 345-8966

city or town Doylestown state PA zip code 18901

Belmont  
Bucks County, Pennsylvania

Rough Plan

First Floor

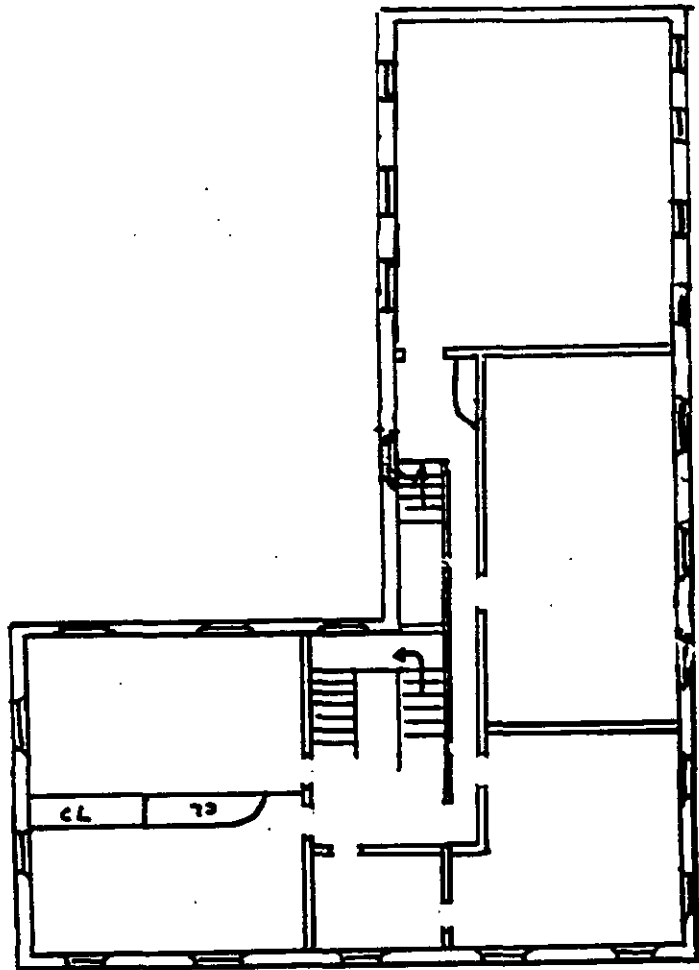




Belmont  
Bucks County, Pennsylvania

Rough Plan

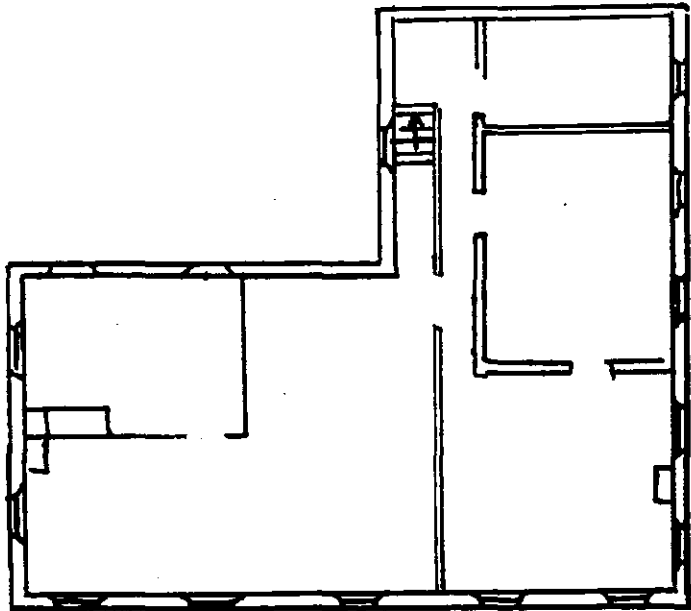
Second Floor



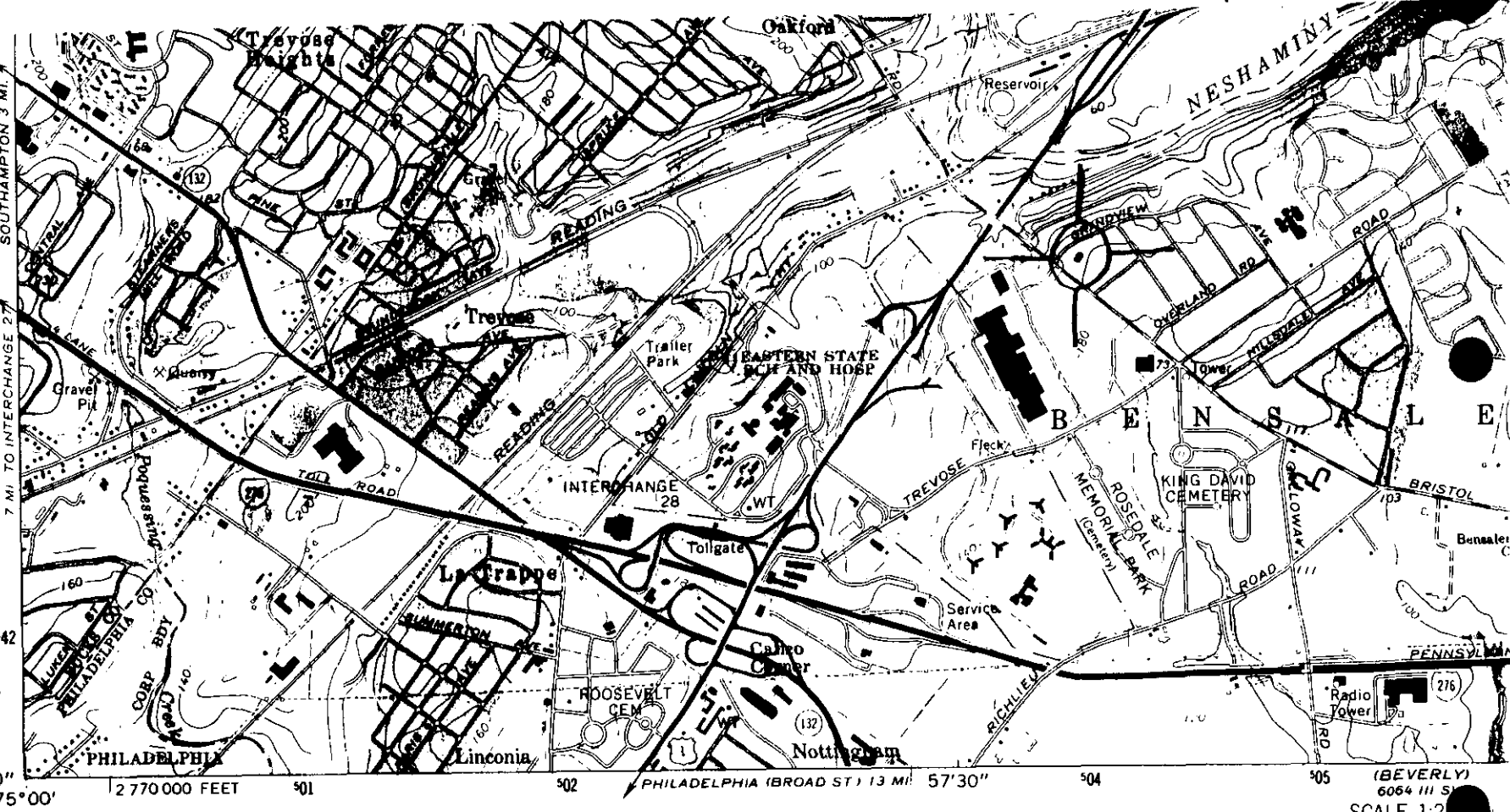
Belmont  
Bucks County, Pennsylvania

Rough Plan

Third Floor



Belmont  
 Bucks County  
 Langhorne Quad  
 Zone 18  
 E 504140  
 N 4443180



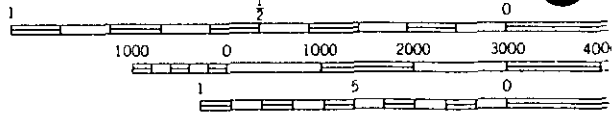
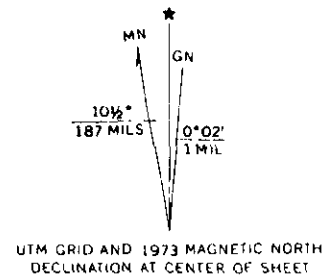
(FRANKFORD)  
 5964 II SE

Mapped by the Army Map Service  
 Edited and published by the Geological Survey  
 Control by USGS and USC&GS

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs  
 taken 1942. Field checked 1942  
 Revised by the Geological Survey from aerial photographs  
 taken 1965. Field checked 1966

Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum  
 10,000-foot grid based on Pennsylvania coordinate system, south zone  
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
 zone 18, shown in blue

Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where  
 generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked  
 Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



CONTOUR INTERVAL 20  
 DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP  
 FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY,  
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYM