

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

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 Urris, Adam Residence
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number 318 West Main Street N/A not for publication
city, town Mechanicsburg N/A vicinity
state PA code 042 county Cumberland code 041 zip code 17055

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
2	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register N/A

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 _____

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)

Second Empire

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

 foundation brick
 walls brick

roof tin

other wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Adam Orris Residence is located on the south side of West Main Street, the main thoroughfare in the borough of Mechanicsburg. Approximately three blocks to the east, Main Street forms the borough's commercial core and is lined with late nineteenth and early twentieth century commercial buildings and rowhouses. Six blocks of the commercial district are included in the Mechanicsburg Commercial Historic District listed on the National Register in 1983. As Main Street progresses west from this historic district, the commercial area ends and the character of the street changes dramatically to a residential street lined with stately turn of the century brick and frame homes, many set back from the street on large landscaped lawns. Many of these homes retain their period carriage houses. The Eberly Residence, a late nineteenth century mansion designed identically to the Orris Residence and now converted into three apartments, borders the nominated property to the west. The Orris Residence is situated on a three-quarter acre lot within this residential section. It is a three story, roughly rectangular brick building erected c. 1887 in the Second Empire style. A c. 1887 two-story brick carriage house is located near the rear of the three acre lot. Both the house and carriage house have experienced few major alterations and possess very good integrity.

The front (south) facade of the house is defined by the tin mansard roof, a shallow central projecting three story bay, a tower that projects to the southeast from the southeastern corner, and a first story porch which spans the facade. The mansard roof is pierced by a dormer with paired double hung windows on its west end, another dormer with single double hung window in the projecting three story bay, and a third dormer with single window immediately east of the three-story bay. All third floor dormers feature pediments and multi-light sash over single sash. A third story gable-roofed porch with delicate turned posts and balustrade sits atop the southeastern corner tower. A deep bracketed cornice separates the third and second stories. The second story has two single windows to the west of the central three story bay, slender

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paired windows in the central bay, and a single window to the east. The southeastern tower has narrow single windows on the sides and a triplet of windows on the front of its second floor. All windows on the second floor have decorative label molds, and double hung sash like those found on the third floor. The first story repeats the fenestration found on the second floor with the exception that the first story windows are taller and have 1/1 sash and an arched double door entrance instead of windows opens the central bay. The first floor porch features decorative turned posts, carved brackets and slender arched supports.

The west elevation features two main sections--a three story portion with mansard roof and projecting two story bay windows on the southern half and a recessed gable-roofed section on the northern half. The first floor of the bay windows has a triplet of windows flanked by single windows. A single window pierces the main wall of the southern half immediately to the north of the bay windows. The second floor of the southern half repeats the fenestration of the first floor, except that the projecting bay has paired center windows. The third story of the southern half features a projecting dormer that has paired windows on the front and single windows on the sides above the bay windows, and a dormer with single window above the single windows in the main wall below. A corbelled chimney projects through the mansard roof between the two dormers. The dormer roofs and pediments, the cornice, and the sash and label moldings on the southern half of the west elevation duplicate those found on the front facade. On the northern half of the west elevation, both floors have two single windows flanking either side of a central exterior chimney that pierces the plain boxed cornice of the gable roof. The windows on the northern half have label moldings and 1/1 sash. The first floor windows nearest the southern half have been covered by a one story paneled porch with central door, double windows to one side of the door, and a shed roof.

The east elevation features four sections--a southern section with projecting second story porch, a central projecting rectangle, a recessed second story porch immediately to the north, and a flat wall beneath a gable roof on the far northern end. The southern section continues the mansard roof, dormer with single window, cornice, and single first and second story windows found on the front facade. This southern portion is high-lighted by the second floor porch with delicate turned corner posts and balustrade and large supporting brackets. The central section has a dormer with paired windows, cornice, and two single windows on the first and second floors that are like those found

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on the front elevation. The porch in the next section of the east facade is recessed under the gable roof and sits atop a first story addition that projects out from under the gable roof. The porch has a turned balustrade. It is accessed by a second story door and a metal fire escape that ascends from ground level across the porch to the third story. The first story addition is pierced by tripled windows. Two double windows with label moldings and 1/1 sash open both floors of the wall at the far northern end of the east elevation.

The rear (north) elevation has four second story 1/1 windows with label moldings beneath a gable with plain cornice. A paneled first story door with transom is flanked by a single 1/1 window to the west and two single 1/1 windows to the east.

The interior of the house features a central hallway and staircase in the front half of each floor. The first floor hallway is flanked by a living room to the west, and library and family room to the east, with a dining room and kitchen to the rear. The second floor has a master bedroom to the west of the hallway and two bedrooms to the east, with a master bath and bedroom to the rear. The third floor plan has a sitting room and bedroom to the east, small kitchen to the west, and attic spaces to the rear. Much of the interior is highlighted by finely crafted, highly ornamented period details. Beaded hardwood molding surrounds the doors and windows throughout the house, and interior shutters shield windows. Door and window surrounds on the first floor also have decorative bull's eyes. Ten foot high arched cherry pocket doors separate the main rooms on the first floor. This floor also has cherry wainscoting in the central hall and entrance foyer, two marble mantels (one with Eastlake style design), and three crystal chandeliers. The entrance hall features a wide stairway with large carved newel post and balustrade, and a large Victorian built-in marble shelf and mirror with carved surround. The entrance doors retain their original etched and beveled frosted glass. The second and third floors have slightly less ornamented features than the first floor but are still well detailed. Highly decorative door hinges, ornately carved closet doors, and broad built-in window seats with paneled bottoms are found on the upper floors. Flooring throughout the house is composed of narrow hardwood boards. Interior walls on the perimeter of the house are plaster board. Interior partition walls are lath and plaster. Ceilings in all rooms except the library are plaster board.

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The house has retained the great majority of its original features. On the exterior, a brick addition was built beneath the recessed second story porch on the east elevation. However, this addition features the same brick construction as found on the rest of the house. The triple windows on this addition were moved forward from the original wall beneath the recessed porch. The metal fire escape was also added to the east facade in recent decades. On the west elevation the wooden shed roof porch was added in the late 1930s; this porch is small in relation to the remainder of the house and is unobtrusive. The original back porch and paneled shutters were removed from the rear (north) elevation in the late 1930s. The balustrade on the second floor of the projecting central bay was also removed at an unknown date. The interior was restored to original condition by the present owners in 1964-1966. Partition walls that were built to divide the larger rooms during the twentieth century were removed. Sections of baseboard molding that had been removed during construction of the partitions were replicated. Linoleum that covered the hardwood floors was removed and the floorboards refinished. Interior walls and ceilings that had suffered water damage or neglect were replaced with plaster board. The first floor kitchen was returned to its original location from a first-floor porch. A bath and small kitchen were also added to the second and third floors respectively during the 1964-1966 restoration.

Located to the rear of the house is a large two and one half story gable roof brick carriage house which has centrally located dormers on the front and back elevations, three pairs of swinging wooden paneled doors on the front, and a second floor porch with balustrade. The 2/2 double hung sash and entrances have plain lintels and sills. The only alterations to the carriage house have been the removal of a window from the west elevation at an unknown date, and the conversion of the second floor to an apartment in 1983.

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
industry

Period of Significance
c. 1887

Significant Dates
c. 1887

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Significant Person
Orris, Adam

Architect/Builder
unknown

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

The Adam Orris Residence is architecturally significant as an excellent example of the Second Empire style of architecture in the borough of Mechanicsburg. The residence was built c. 1887 by Adam Orris, one of the borough's leading businessmen. The residence was one of two identical mansions built by Orris and his business partner, Austin G. Eberly, along the prestigious residential end of the community's main thoroughfare and promenade, Main Street. A locally prominent manufacturer, Orris was a partner in the well known Eberly and Orris Wheel Works, manufacturers of wheels and wheel parts. Built c. 1887 by an unknown architect, the Orris Residence exhibits an eclectic blend of Second Empire and Victorian period styling. In addition to a relatively unaltered exterior, the residence is also architecturally important for its high degree of interior integrity and its intact period carriage house. The Adam Orris Residence remains today as a fine example of a fashionable late nineteenth century residence built in a small community by one of its most prominent businessmen.

The borough of Mechanicsburg was originally settled in the late eighteenth century by drovers on their way to eastern cattle markets. Mechanicsburg was a frequent stopping point for travelers because of its location along two major east/west roads and along the major transportation route between the well established cities of Philadelphia and Baltimore and rapidly developing Pittsburgh and the Northwest Territory. Often the impassable Susquehanna River caused the drovers and merchants to stop, repair and rebuild their wagons, and wait for the river to fall. The area was also attractive as a stopping point because of its available water supply and fine grazing land. Mechanics and artisans recognized the unique advantages of the location and also settled the area. In 1828 the borough was incorporated as Mechanicsburg. The Cumberland Valley Railroad was extended to the area in 1837 and by

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the mid-nineteenth century, Mechanicsburg had become a well-established commercial community. Located halfway between Harrisburg and Carlisle, the town not only served travelers but also passengers of the railroad as well as the rapidly developing rural communities that relied on it to provide their shopping needs. During the 1850s the population doubled and commercial establishments of all types were built along Main Street.

By the late nineteenth century the town's reputation as a transportation center was well established. Transportation related industries and carriage manufacturers were major employers. The borough had the reputation of building some of the best wagons available along the East Coast. One of the most prominent businesses was the Eberly and Orris Wheel Works established in 1885.

Adam Orris was a member of an old, established Cumberland County family. Born in 1838, Orris started his business training by clerking in several area stores. In 1862 he entered the army and served as sergeant-major of the 157th Regiment Pennsylvania Infantry. After leaving the army he managed a store until 1870, when he formed a partnership with Capt. Samuel J. Shoop. Together they purchased over 2,000 acres of timberland in Franklin County, Pennsylvania, built sawmills and manufactured lumber. During the next fifteen years, Orris and his partner built sawmills throughout Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia.

In 1885 Orris formed a partnership with Austin G. Eberly, also a member of a prominent Cumberland County family. Austin and his brother, John, had started the Eberly Brothers manufacturing firm in 1878. In 1884 John Eberly sold his share of the firm to Orris. The firm of Eberly and Orris manufactured wheels of all styles as well as spokes, rims and hubs. Orris brought his experience as a hardwood timber expert to the business while Eberly supervised the manufacturing process. During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Eberly and Orris Wheel Works manufacturing firm was one of Mechanicsburg's largest and most well known industries. Their products were sold throughout the United States and in many foreign countries. The manufacturing complex was located facing the Cumberland Valley Railroad for a distance of approximately 400 feet along Allen Street and 160 feet deep. The complex consisted of four main buildings including a very large factory as well as numerous sheds and outbuildings. The mills were in constant operation and at its height, the firm employed 150 people. One of the original mill buildings was recently demolished and the last two remaining structures were recently aluminum sided and enlarged to house a machine shop.

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Unfortunately little else is know about Adam Orris with the expection that he was one of the proprietors of Irving Female College, which operated in Mechanicsburg from 1856 to 1929, and still stands along Main and Filbert Streets. In a deed dated November 10, 1886 Orris bought a tract of land on which the Cumberland Valley Institute once stood on the western end of Main Street. The deed reveals that Orris paid \$3,000 for the parcel and that Austin G. Eberly already owned the adjacent lot to the west. Although the exact year of construction of the residence is not known, it is presumed to be c. 1887. The architect/builder is unknown.

The Adam Orris Residence exhibits an eclectic blend of Victorian period detailing on a predominantly Second Empire form. The Second Empire style characteristics include the steep mansard roof, tall narrow windows, and three-story bays, all of which add to the appearance of tallness. The decoratively carved wooden detailing, including porches, cornice and surrounds, reflect eclectic inspiration.

In addition to its mostly unaltered exterior, the residence retains a significant degree of interior integrity, including outstanding period crystal chandeliers, finely crafted cherry and maple woodwork, marble mantels with Eastlake style designs, beveled and etched glass windows, a dumbwaiter and several built-in pieces of furniture. The house has been fully restored to its original condition with the exception of minor alterations on the third floor and in the kitchen. The residence also retains its original carriage house which exhibits restrained period detailing in the form of dormers, arched windows and decorative wooden porch elements.

The Orris Residence is one of approximately twelve Second Empire style residences in the borough of Mechanicsburg. It is however, the finest example of the style within the borough. Four Second Empire buildings are included in the Mechanicsburg Commercial Historic District listed on the National Register in 1983. The Second Empire style buildings in the district include 50 and 46 East Main Street, 38 West Main Street, and 11-13 Railroad Avenue. Built c. 1885, 50 East Main Street is a five bay, three story brick residence with bracketed dormers, a plain cornice and a bracketed hood over an arched entrance. Built c. 1887, 46 East Main Street has been altered by the application of aluminum siding. Built c. 1885, 38 West Main Street (also known as 40

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West Main Street) is a two bay, three story brick building with a slate roof, hooded dormers, bracketed cornice, bay windows and an arched entrance. Built c. 1850, 11-13 Railroad Avenue is a five bay, three story brick building with a bracketed cornice. The windows and entrances have been boarded over. Of these four properties, only the building at 38 West Main Street parallels the Orris Residence in its amount and degree of finely crafted details. It is, however, an example of a rowhouse type residence typical of those built along Mechanicsburg's commercial corridor on Main Street in the late nineteenth century with a storefront on the first floor and residence above.

There are six Second Empire style residences not included in the Commercial Historic District. The residence at 110-112 Market Street is one of the finest stylistic examples among the six buildings. 110-112 Market Street is distinguished by its bay windows, ornate window surrounds, recessed porches and terra cotta stringcourse featuring acanthus leaves. Although comparable to the Adam Orris Residence in size, 110-112 Market Street is a double residence instead of being a single family home. In addition, although its amount and quality of detail is equal to that of the nominated house, 110-112 Market Street has been noticeably altered in several places. The dwellings at 101 and 203 East Main Street have been altered by the addition of early twentieth century formstone. The mansard roof on 101 East Main Street has also been aluminum sided. Built in 1887, 301-303 East Main Street is a three story, brick double residence with an ornate cornice, bay windows and arched windows with decorative surrounds. A portion of the first floor has been altered by the addition of a storefront. 204 West Main Street is a three bay, three story brick residence with round arched windows, decorative cornice and an arched entrance. 300 West Main Street is a two bay, three story brick residence with a bay window and decorative cornice. Although relatively unaltered, this building lacks the imposing size and stylistic details of the nominated house.

The only single family Second Empire residence in Mechanicsburg that once paralleled the Orris Residence in size and detailing is the Eberly Residence immediately to the west of the nominated buildings. Built as a twin of the Orris Residence, the Eberly Residence has since experienced considerably more alterations than the Orris Residence has. The mansard roof and rear porch of the Eberly Residence have been aluminum sided. A deck complete with hot tub has been added onto the rear first story. The front doors of the Eberly Residence have also been changed to solid panelled doors from the original doors with etched and

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beveled glass. Windows on the northern halves of the side elevations and on the second story of the rear (north) elevation have also been boarded over. Interior alterations include conversion of the first floor living room to a bedroom and the addition of bathrooms and small kitchens to accommodate conversion of the building to three apartments. Thus the Eberly Residence has lost much of its integrity as compared to the Orris Residence.

Deeds indicate that Adam Orris owned the residence until 1919, when he was apparently forced to sell the home. Orris' financial difficulties may have been the result of the decline in the wooden wheel manufacturing business; however, it is unclear exactly when the firm of Eberly and Orris Wheel Works was dissolved. It is apparent from the 1919 deed that Eberly had also sold his home next door. From 1919 to 1926, the Orris Residence served as the United Methodist Home for Children. Since 1927 it has been used as a private residence. The Adam Orris Residence stands today as a fine, relatively intact example of the Second Empire style of architecture in the borough of Mechanicsburg.

9. Major Bibliographical References

see attached 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 # _____

See continuation sheet

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 .75

UTM References

A

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3	2	8	5	9	0
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4	4	5	2	9	8	0
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 Zone Easting Northing

C

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B

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 Zone Easting Northing

D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mary Jo Martin/William Sisson
 organization N/A/PHMC date 1987
 street & number 206 F Timber Trail/State Museum telephone (301) 836-8661/(717) 783-8946
 city or town Bel Air/Harrisburg state MD/PA zip code 21014/17108

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Major Bibliographical References

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- Donehoo, Dr. George P. History of the Cumberland Valley in Pennsylvania. Harrisburg,
Pennsylvania: Susquehanna History Association, 1930. Vol. I.
- "Eberly and Orris: Manufacturers of Wheels and Wheel Materials." Greater America.
July and August 1899, vol. II, Nos. 10 and 11.
- History of Cumberland and Adams Counties, Pennsylvania. Chicago: Warner, Beers and
Company, 1886.
- Keefer, Norman D. A History of Mechanicsburg and the Surrounding Area. (Mechanicsburg
Area Historical Committee, 1976).
- Liber J 29, Folio 608. Deed from E. Clyde and Elizabeth Orris to William M. and Carolyn
Kerr. April 24, 1981. Cumberland County Courthouse, Carlisle, Pennsylvania.
- Liber 6790, Folio 13. Deed from Adam Orris, et ux. to The Christ Home. February 5, 1919.
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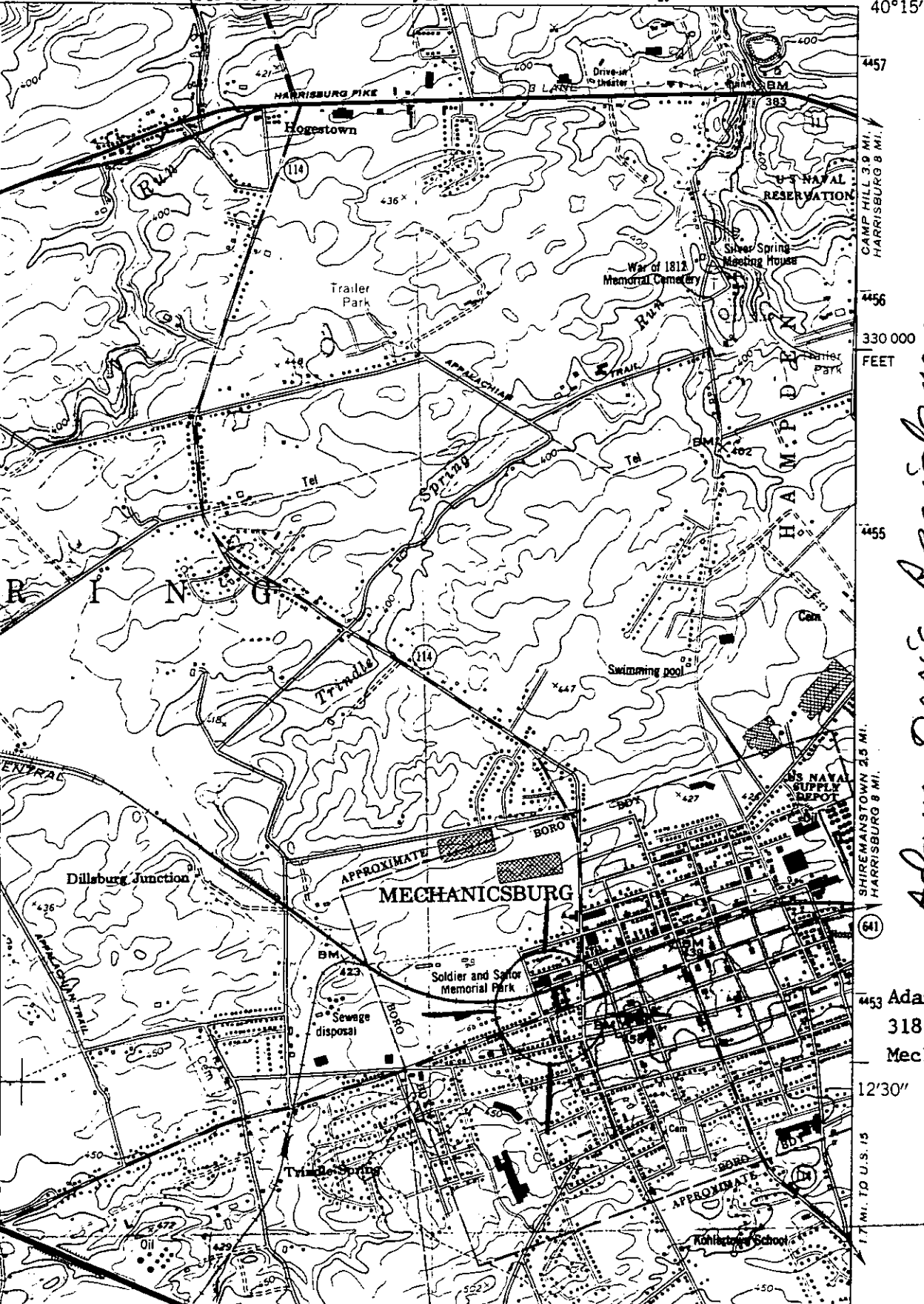
Beginning at a point on the north edge of Main Street 225 feet from the northwest corner the intersection of West Main Street and Route 114, being a point where the southwest corner of the lot formerly of Mary E. Mumper meets the southeast corner of the nominated property; then proceeding west 115 feet six inches; then proceeding north 280 feet; then proceeding east 115 feet six inches; then proceeding south 280 feet to the point of beginning.

The boundary includes the nominated buildings and all historically associated land. It excludes Main Street to the south, non-contributing buildings to the east and west, and railroad tracks to the north.

MECHANICSBURG QUADRANGLE
 PENNSYLVANIA
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)
 NE/4 CARLISLE 15' QUADRANGLE

5664 IV SW
 HARRISBURG WEST

HUSTONS MILL 0.4 MI.
 2'30" 327 2 200 000 FEET 328 329 77°00' 40°15'



*Adam Orris Residence
 Cumberland County
 Zone 18 - Mechanicsburg Quad
 E 328590 N 4452980*

641
 4453 Adam Orris Residence
 318 West Main Street
 Mechanicsburg, PA. 17055

12'30"
 1.7 MI. TO U.S. 15