

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 for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

=====

1. Name of Property

=====

historic name FISSEL'S SCHOOL

other names/site number N/A

=====

2. Location

=====

street & number North side of Fissel's Church Road (SR 3015), at the intersection of Country Club Road not for publication n/a  
city or town Shrewsbury Township vicinity n/a  
state Pennsylvania code PA County York code 133  
zip code 17327

=====

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

=====

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x 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 xx meets      does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant      nationally      statewide x locally. (      See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Dr. B. Glass, Ex. Dir. 9/11/97  
Signature of certifying official Date  
PA 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 for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

USDI/NPS NRHP Registration Form

Fissel's School  
name of property

York County, Pennsylvania  
county and state

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4. National Park Service Certification  
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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 Keeper      Date of Action

=====  
5. Classification  
=====

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

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

Category of Property (Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	buildings
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	sites
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	structures
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	objects
<u>1</u>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register n/a

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.) n/a

=====  
6. Function or Use  
=====

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>Education</u>	Sub: <u>School</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Fissel's School  
name of property

York County, Pennsylvania  
county and state

6. Function or Use, continued

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: Recreation and Culture Sub: Museum  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian/Queen Anne  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone  
roof Shake  
walls Brick  
other Concrete  
Wood shingles

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Fissel's School  
name of property

York County, Pennsylvania  
county and state

9. Major Bibliographical References

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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

Name of repository: Historic York, Inc.: York County Historic Sites Survey Files

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property less than one acre

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Zone	Easting	Northing
1	18	351525	4403230	3	_____	_____
2	_____	_____	_____	4	_____	_____
	See continuation sheet.					

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Barbara A. Brand

organization Palladio Company date July 17, 1997

street & number 3415 Fairfield Road telephone 717-642-6415

city or town Gettysburg state PA zip code 17325

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 1

Fissel's School  
name of property  
York County, PA  
county and State

=====  
Narrative Description

Fissel's School is a one-and-a-half story, one-room schoolhouse built in 1896, with stylistic elements of Queen Anne influence. The building is unchanged from its original appearance and maintains a high level of integrity. Its walls are constructed of brick above a fieldstone foundation. A one-story projecting portico with a pent roof provides access to the interior; over this entrance is a gable with fishscale shingles and a decorative bargeboard. Above, the gable of the main building also has fishscale shingles, and a carved bargeboard. A belfry tops the roof above the entrance. The interior of the building is simple, with built-in shelves in the vestibule, plain trim around doors and windows, original wood floors, blackboards, and a large coal-burning stove. The schoolhouse stands facing southeast toward Fissel's Church Road, on a large, rolling tract of land which today includes the Susquehannock School buildings, part of the Southern York County School District. However, the nomination boundary includes only the one-room school and its immediate school yard setting. The structure is in excellent condition, and has had no major alteration since its construction.

Exterior

Fissel's School is a one-and-a-half story brick structure built in 1896 as a one-room schoolhouse in Shrewsbury Township, near Glen Rock, Pennsylvania. The building faces southeast, and fronts on Fissel's Church Road. The main section of the school measures 28' 6" wide and 30' 4" deep; a projecting entrance portico, which serves as the vestibule and coat room, measures approximately 22' wide and 7' deep. Built over a foundation of local fieldstone, the brick walls are constructed in common bond. The entrance portico, which projects from the southeast-facing gable end of the building, is one story high. The central door is not original, although the three-light transom appears to be so. The cement steps which lead to the door from the left side also replace the original steps, which were probably wood. The entrance portico is lighted by a pair of original four-over-four sash windows with three-paneled shutters. The portico's pent roof is covered with wood shakes, and includes a gable over the door which features Queen Anne style fishscale shingles and a decorative bargeboard.

Above this entrance portico, the southeast gable end of the main section of the building is covered with fishscale shingles, and the carved bargeboard is embellished at the bottom with a row of spindles, again showing the Queen Anne influence. In the center of the gable is a four-over-four sash window to light the attic. Its plain architrave is peaked at the top, where the inscription "Built A.D. 1896" is carved and painted in black. The roof of the school is covered with wood shakes, and above the entrance is a wood belfry, curved trusses, a four-sided wood shake roof, and an iron finial at the

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 7 Page 2

Fissel's School  
name of property  
York County, PA  
county and State

=====  
Narrative Description, Continued

top. The bell which hangs in the belfry is believed to be original.

The north-east and south-west elevations of the schoolhouse are identical, each having three windows with four-over-four sashes and three-paneled shutters. The north elevation has two four-over-four sash windows without shutters, and the gable is covered with fishscale shingles. An interior brick chimney rises at this end of the building.

While the building was in use as a schoolhouse, there were three outbuildings. According to a former student at the school, there were two privies, flanking a shed that stored wood and later coal for the school stove. These buildings no longer survive, but they were located about 10 to 15 feet behind the schoolhouse. The ground behind the schoolhouse still has a flat area which may indicate the former location of these structures. This same former student also recalled that the school had free access to a spring on the property to the west of the schoolhouse.

Interior

The interior of Fissel's School is plain and utilitarian, and all of its detail appears to be original. The entrance portico houses the coat room; two rows of metal hooks are attached to boards on both the exterior and interior wall. The double row of hooks to the right of the entrance is placed lower than the others, evidently to hold the coats and hats of the younger students. There is a wainscot of vertical boards below the windows, and on the opposite wall. At each end of this room are four built-in shelves and a closed cabinet; these were likely used for holding lunch buckets, supplies, and perhaps some books. Two doors lead into the main section of the building, the schoolroom itself.

The schoolroom, large and well-lighted, has its original pine floor, four-panel doors, windows, and architectural trim. Two blackboards, each twelve feet long, fill the walls between the entrance doors and the pair of windows in the wall opposite; the blackboards fulfill the requirement that there be "24 lineal feet of slate or good composition blackboard." The wainscot in the room is formed of vertical board paneling. A large, coal-burning stove, which probably replaced or was adapted from the original wood-burning stove, sits at the north end of the room. Four electric ceiling lights hang from the corners of the room; electricity was probably installed at the school in the 1930's.

Since its closing, Fissel's School has been maintained by the Southern York County School District as a museum interpreting the history of the school, as well as the history and prehistory of the area. The School District has undertaken minor repairs, such as painting the wood trim about

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section   7   Page   3  

Fissel's School  
name of property  
York County, PA  
county and State

=====  
Narrative Description, Continued

1975 and refurbishing the coal-burning stove; replacing the wood shingle roof with new wood shingles in 1974; and keeping the structure sound and in excellent condition, thereby preserving its remarkable integrity. At the time these repairs were made in the 1970's, there was no evidence in the roof of structural damage, and there has not been a need to date for major repairs or restoration. Numbers which were spray-painted on the brick building, faintly visible, are scheduled for non-destructive removal using contractors and procedures recommended by the PHMC-Bureau of Historic Preservation staff. Overall, the building is in sound and excellent condition.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section   8   Page   1  

Fissel's School  
name of property  
York County, PA  
county and State

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Significance Statement

Fissel's School is a significant surviving example of a late nineteenth century one-room school house in southern York County, Pennsylvania. It provides important documentation of the history of education in York County from the late nineteenth to the middle of the twentieth century.

The school was the second school building built at this site, and played a significant role in Shrewsbury Township from its construction in 1896 until its closing half a century later. It is one of six surviving late nineteenth century one-room school houses in Shrewsbury Township, but Fissel's School alone has not been adapted to residential use, and thus maintains its original interior and exterior architectural features. Fissel's School has been maintained and operated as a museum since the early 1950's.

Brief history of education in Shrewsbury Township, York County

In 1837, voters in Shrewsbury Township were among the first in Pennsylvania to ratify the 1834 Free School Act, which provided state funds for support of public schools. Reactions to the legislation differed all over the state, but had been overwhelmingly negative; the Shrewsbury Township voters' decision to uphold the new law showed unusual support for the cause of public education. Throughout the nineteenth century, lawmakers implemented new laws governing public education statewide, and gradually improvements were made. The legislature adopted provisions for a minimum school year (1848); aid to normal schools for the education of teachers (1861); appointment of county superintendents (1854) and supervising principals (1901); and establishment of rural high schools (1895), and many other improvements.

Before the Civil War, the time students spent in rural schools was minimal. There was no age limit, or grading system. Teachers, who were initially "certified" by the local school district, had no requirements beyond the basics they were expected to teach their students. Private normal schools received state aid in 1861, eventually being purchased by the state and converted to State Teachers Colleges in 1911. The length of the school year varied according to local custom, with most being in session only about three or four months a year. By the early 20th century, the school year was more or less standardized at seven to nine months long.

In the early 19th century, students began with the basics of reading, writing, geography and arithmetic. Curriculum advanced as teachers themselves

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 2

Fissel's School  
name of property  
York County, PA  
county and State

=====  
Significance Statement, continued

became more educated and trained. A 1912 common school diploma from an unidentified school in York County lists the course of study required for graduation from the eighth grade: reading, writing, English grammar, orthography (spelling), arithmetic, geography, physiology, U. S. history, and civil government. By the 1930's, all schools were required in addition to these subjects to provide music, art, extracurricular programs, and physical training for their pupils. As time went on, therefore, the teachers in one-room schools in York County had greater and greater responsibilities and duties to fulfill.

History of Fissel's School; construction of existing school

The history of Fissel's School in Shrewsbury Township began in the early 1830's, when local parents decided to establish a school in the west-central part of the township, privately supported by fees assessed from the parents of students. The school was housed for the first few years in two rooms of the sexton's house at Fissel's Church, hence the name which has been historically attached to the school. After the township vote in 1837, state support was provided for public education to the newly established directors of the Shrewsbury Township school district.

Probably in the late 1830's, a building to house Fissel's School was built. County maps of 1860 and 1876 show a school house located at the same site as the present-day school. This evidence leads to the conclusion that two school buildings were constructed at the same location, the first probably in the late 1830's and the second (today's Fissel's School) in 1896. The present-day school was built of brick, and its construction was apparently authorized to replace the older building, probably run-down after sixty years of use.

Architecturally, Fissel's School is typical of the standard design for one-room schools that had developed in the nineteenth century. The brick building is sturdily built, prominently positioned, and ornamented tastefully to denote its importance as a public structure. As regulated by the state, the interior is clean, open, well-lighted and -ventilated, and organized to allow order and discipline to be maintained. The vestibule is arranged to hold the coats, hats, boots and lunches of several dozen students. In the schoolroom, large windows let in both morning and afternoon light, as well as the breezes; the coal-burning stove is sufficient to warm the spacious room. The end walls hold the required twenty-four feet of blackboard, where several exercises could be undertaken at once under the teacher's disciplined eye.

It is not yet established who donated or sold the small parcel for the Fissel's schoolhouse to the Shrewsbury Township School Directors in the 1830's. Tradition states that the land was provided by Michael Klinefelter

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 3

Fissel's School  
name of property  
York County, PA  
county and State

=====  
Significance Statement, continued

Seitz, who owned land in the vicinity of the school and served as the first manager of the school in 1836. A search of York County land records does not yield information on the date of the transfer, or the exact size of the parcel, so a historic boundary cannot be accurately determined. The boundary described in this nomination encompasses the open land around the school, from the public road to a line just behind the probable location of the school's now vanished outbuildings.

Expansion of education in Shrewsbury Township

Other school buildings were constructed elsewhere in Shrewsbury Township as the population grew during the nineteenth century. Maps of 1860 and 1876 show that in those sixteen years the number of schools grew from eight to fourteen. Through the first half of the twentieth century, thirteen of these school buildings (one school apparently having closed) continued to serve as the foundation of education in the township. The thirteen schools were: White Oak, Seitz's, Hametown, Ruhl's, Centerville, Kratz's, Keeney's, King's, Barren Hill, Gerbrick's, Bowser's, Fissel's, and Seitzland. Today, six of the thirteen schoolhouses survive: Seitzland and Gebrick's Schools, probably built before 1860; Keeney's School, possibly built before 1876; and Fissel's, King's, and Seitz' Schools, all built between about 1895 and 1901. These last three schools were almost certainly built by the same unidentified builder. All three have nearly identical belfries, fishscale shingles, peaked attic windows, and entrance porticoes; King's School is dated on the attic window "1901." Of the surviving six school buildings, Fissel's School is the only one which has not been altered in any way. The architectural integrity of Seitzland, Gebrick's, Keeney's, King's and Seitz' Schools has been significantly compromised by adaptation to residential use.

The new Fissel's school building was in use from 1896 until its closing about fifty years later. The school had been built just at the time when the fate of one-room schools in the state was being debated, and consolidation of schools was encouraged. It seems apparent that the local school officials who authorized the building of three new or replacement one-room schools between 1896 and 1901 did not believe that consolidation would affect their township for many years. Shrewsbury Township's one-teacher schools managed, perhaps with growing difficulty, to meet the expanded requirements of public education in the twentieth century.

A search of copies of the Pennsylvania School Journal for 1895-1897 did not uncover information pertinent to the construction of the new Fissel's School in 1896, or to the decisions of the township's school directors at that time regarding one-room schools. In the 1890's, the publication included essays, articles and commentary on education issues, official regulations and announcements, texts of legislation, and summaries of reports from school

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 4

Fissel's School  
name of property  
York County, PA  
county and State

=====  
Significance Statement, continued

district superintendents. Superintendent Gardner of York County reported irregularly on the construction of new, multi-grade schools and repairs to one-room schools; Shrewsbury Township is not mentioned in 1896 or 1897.

School consolidation in York County and Shrewsbury Township

By 1897, the year after Fissel's School was built, the future of one-room schools was in question. It was determined that one-teacher schools had small enrollments, with high expenses. It was also increasingly difficult to find any teachers for the more remote locations, and these small rural schools seemed useful only as training centers for novice teachers. When the state established State Teachers' Colleges in 1911, even that small usefulness for one-room schools was obsolete.

Consolidation meant the inevitable disappearance of one-room schools throughout Pennsylvania. According to an 1897 law, new schools were to be built in population centers. A 1911 act was passed which authorized directors to erect suitable modern buildings for the purpose of consolidating several schools, instead of repairing one-room schoolhouses. These new, modern schoolhouses would allow for the proper grading of classes and would save considerable funds by allowing for economical use of space, supplies, and teachers' abilities. In 1919, state lawmakers passed an act requiring school directors to close all one-teacher schools with an average attendance of 10 or fewer students, thus sealing the fate of those one-room schools which remained. A photograph taken in 1913 shows that the students at Fissel's School numbered thirteen, very close to the minimum number established by law.

In the early twentieth century, Shrewsbury Township had thirteen one-room schools, identified above. By 1940, only one rural school at Centerville had been closed. Better roads and transportation made small, isolated schools obsolete, as it became possible to bring students easily from their rural homes to more centralized school locations.

By mid-century, consolidation in York County was nearly complete. The Southern York School District was established in the late 1940's, combining the former school districts of Shrewsbury and Codorus Townships, and the boroughs of Glen Rock, New Freedom, Shrewsbury, and Railroad. By 1947, schools in the new school district consisted of: Codorus Township, a high school and eleven one-room schools; Glen Rock and New Freedom Boroughs, a high school and an elementary school; Shrewsbury Borough, a two-year high school and an elementary school; Railroad Borough, an elementary school; Shrewsbury Township, eight one-room schools (White Oak, Barren Hill, Gerbrick's, and Kratz's had been closed). By 1951 the Southern York County School District had one junior-senior high school (Susquehannock High School) to accommodate all high school students in the school district. A new elementary school was built at Glenville; buildings which had served as schools in the boroughs of

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 5

Fissel's School  
name of property  
York County, PA  
county and State

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Significance Statement, continued

Glen Rock, New Freedom, and Shrewsbury now became elementary schools; and all of the one-room school houses in Shrewsbury Township, York County were officially closed. With the exception of Fissel's School, which stood on the campus of the newly erected consolidated high school, all of the township's former one-room schoolhouses were sold to private owners, and have been either lost or significantly altered.

Conclusion

Fissel's School stands today on the 95-acre campus of the Susquehannock High School, the last one-room school in Shrewsbury Township still in public ownership. School officials decided to construct the modern high school on a hill, far behind the old schoolhouse that stands close to the public road. School officials decided also to preserve the old schoolhouse as a museum. A volunteer group has collected suitable furnishings, such as desks, chairs and bookcases, and has gathered for display artifacts and mementos from residents who were former students at Fissel's School. These objects are displayed in the school's vestibule and in the schoolroom, and are important resources which document the history of education both in the township and in the county. As the result of these combined efforts, the school today is in the same condition and has much of the same appearance as on its last official day as a one-room school house.

Fissel's School is a prominent landmark on the school grounds, a daily reminder of the advances that have transformed public education in the one hundred years since its construction. Typifying in its plan, siting and architecture the standard one-room school design built in the county in the late nineteenth century, Fissel's School embodies and documents a significant period in local history and in the history of education in York County, Pennsylvania.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 1

Fissel's School  
name of property  
York County, PA  
county and State

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Bibliography

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Smith, Gladys. Personal interview, September 11, 1996.

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 1

Fissel's School  
name of property  
York County, PA  
county and State

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Geographical Data

Verbal Boundary Description:

The property begins at a point on the north side of Fissel's Church Road, 106 feet, 6 inches directly south of the southern corner of the schoolhouse portico; continues northwest, parallel to a fence on the adjoining property, for 170 feet; continues north-northeast, parallel to the rear wall of the schoolhouse for 113 feet, 6 inches; continues south-southeast for 140 feet; continues southwest along Fissel's Church Road and set back from the road for 136 feet.

Boundary Justification:

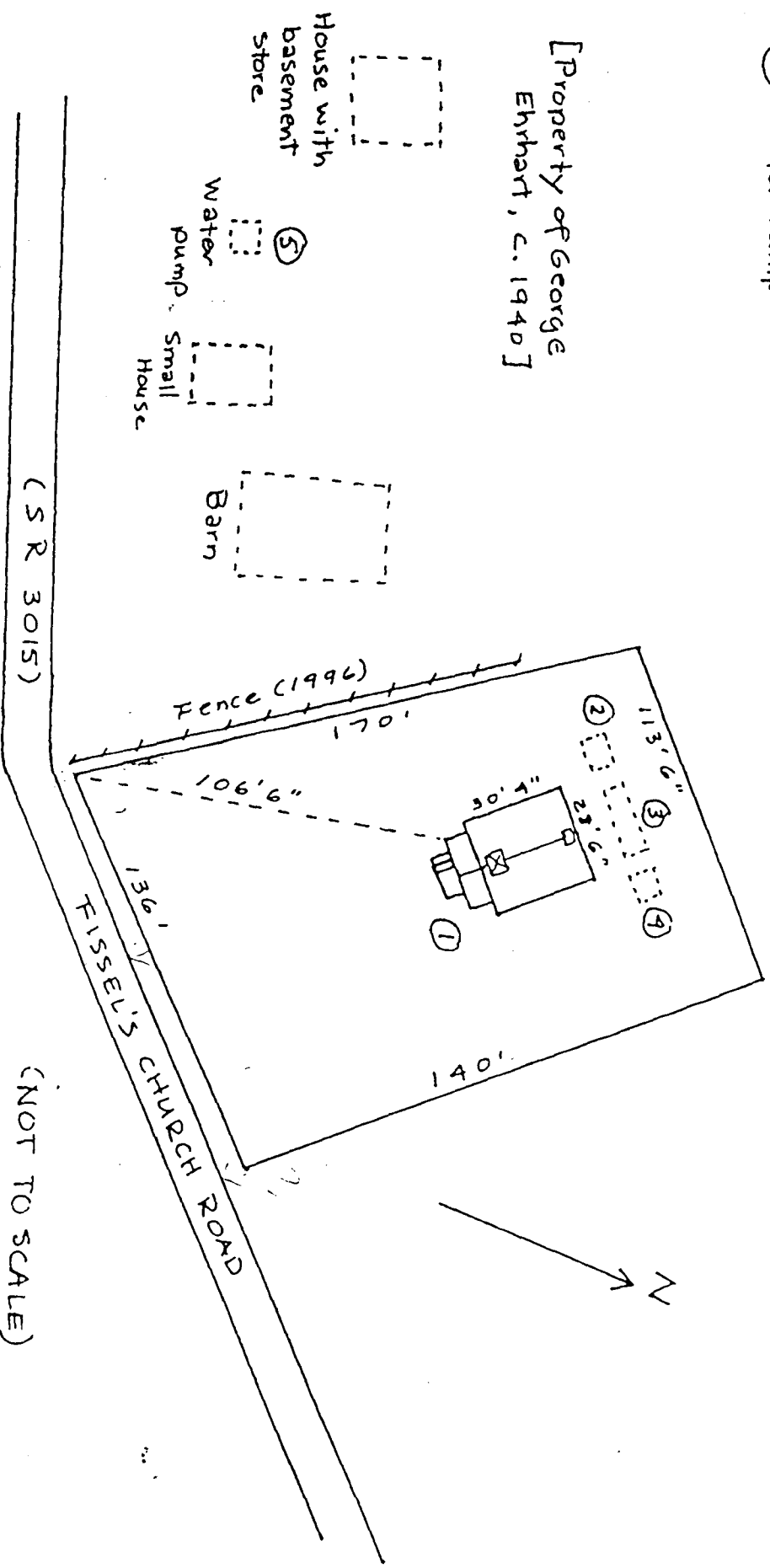
The boundary of this property is drawn to incorporate the school yard area, and includes the area between the school building and Fissel's Church Road, and the probable location of the former school outbuildings.

FISSELL'S SCHOOL  
Shrewsbury Township, York County, PA

- Boundaries drawn, 1996
- Site Plan, c.1940, based on sketch map by Gladys Smith, a former student (See Note 1)

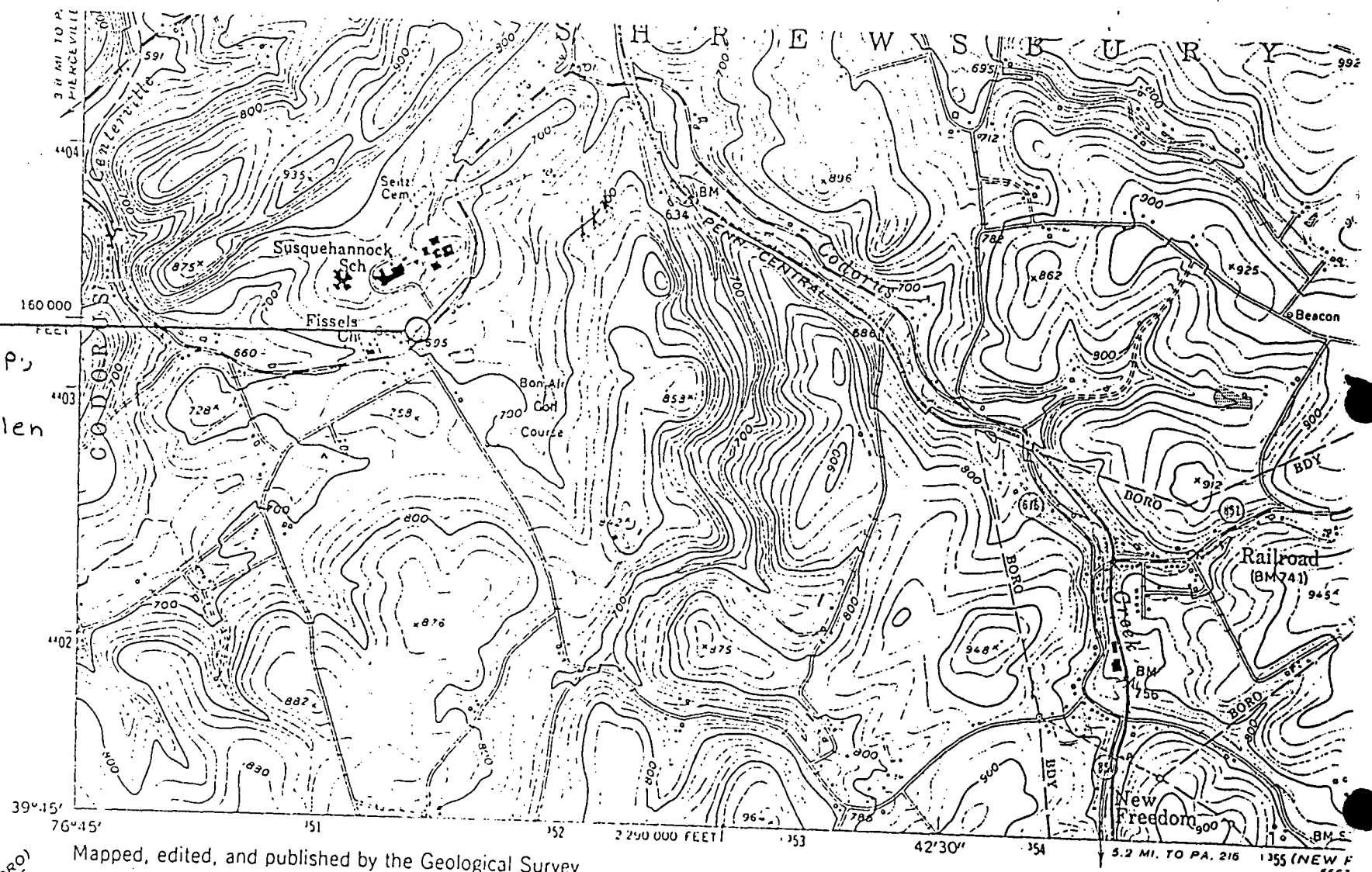
- Legend:
- ① FISSELL'S SCHOOL
  - ② Girls' Privy
  - ③ Coal Shed
  - ④ Boys' Privy
  - ⑤ Water Pump

[Property of George Ehrhart, c.1940]



(NOT TO SCALE)  
B.A. Brand, 1996

FISSEL'S  
 SCHOOL  
 Shrewsbury Twp.,  
 York Co., PA  
 Quadrangle: Glen  
 Rock, PA  
 TM Ref:  
 Section 18  
 E: 351525  
 N: 4403230



(LINEBORO)  
 5663 III NE

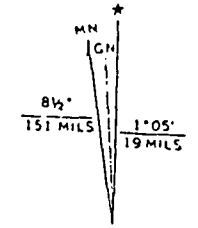
Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS, USC&GS, and USCE

Topography from aerial photographs by photogrammetric methods. Aerial photographs taken 1952. Field check 1954

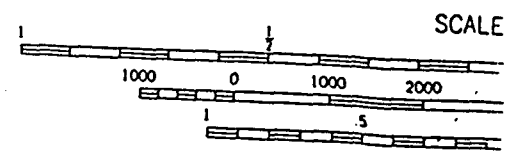
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum.  
 10,000-foot grid based on Pennsylvania coordinate system,  
 south zone  
 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,  
 zone 18, shown in blue

Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with  
 State of Pennsylvania agencies from aerial photographs  
 taken 1968 and 1973. This information not field checked



UTM GRID AND 1973 MAGNETIC NORTH  
 DECLINATION AT CENTER OF SHEET

Map photoinspected 1984  
 No major culture or drainage changes observed



SCALE

CONTOUR IN'  
 DATUM IS ''

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NA'  
 FOR SALE BY U. S.  
 DENVER, COLORADO 8022E  
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MA'