

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

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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 Hammerstein, Oscar II Farm
other names/site number Highland Farm

2. Location

street & number 70 East Road not for publication
city, town Doylestown (Doylestown Twp.) vicinity
state Pennsylvania code PA county Bucks code 017 zip code 18901

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> </u>	<u> </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> </u>	<u> </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u> </u>	<u> </u> objects
		<u>4</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 _____
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 dwellingAGRICULTURE/agricultural outbuilding

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling**7. Description**

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

MID-19th CENTURY

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONEwalls STUCCOAluminumroof METAL/Tin

other _____

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Highland Farm consists of almost five acres of land on the outskirts of Doylestown Borough at the top of a small rise. The farm is landscaped and includes the farmhouse (which faces East Road) at the peak of the hill, a mid-nineteenth century frame bank barn at the rear of the house, and a mid-nineteenth century frame carriage house north of the barn and northeast of the house. The farm is surrounded on three sides by fields and pine woods; to the south, over an embankment and screened by shrubs and trees, lies the 202 bypass. The large, deep cut made for the bypass separated the nominated resource from the majority of the land associated with the farm.

The farmhouse, a mid-nineteenth century stuccoed masonry, three story, three bay, double pile, hip roof residence, faces east. A one story porch with modified Doric columns runs the length of the facade and wraps around the south elevation of the main block; widely spaced brackets adorn the cornice of the porch. A balustrade featuring straight spindles interspersed with diamond shapes surmounts the porch and features pineapples at the top of the newels. The balustrade was added by Dorothy Hammerstein in 1954 as a present to her husband on the occasion of their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary; the pineapples on top of the newels were stage props from Rodgers and Hammerstein's Broadway production of their musical, South Pacific. There is an interior, masonry chimney on the south end of the main block and an exterior, masonry chimney on the north elevation. The primary entrance features a wide rectangular transom with sidelights and is centrally located on the facade; the door features two oval shaped panels. Windows are symmetrically spaced on the facade and side elevations; windows on the first floor are 2/2 sash; the second floor windows contain 6/6 sash and the third floor windows have smaller 6/6 sashes. Shutters flank the windows on the facade and the first floor windows on the main block. A mid-nineteenth century (original to the house) two story kitchen ell with a shallow gable roof stands at the southwest corner. A ca. 1900 two story frame addition with a gable roof connects the ell to a once free standing, one story, masonry building with a shed roof; below this building is a barrel vaulted root cellar. A two story frame addition featuring a glassed-in porch on the first floor was added during the Hammerstein ownership (it does not appear in an August 1940 photograph), as was a small one story frame vestibule; these additions adjoin the north elevation of the ell and the west elevation of the main block. The rear portions of the house are covered with siding; all windows in the rear ell are 1/1 sash. All exterior window and door surrounds are simple with no elaborate ornamentation. The cornice is also plain.

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The main block is a modified double pile, central passage plan. The central stairs remain intact but all interior partitions have been removed with the exception of the wall dividing the front and back rooms on the south of the house; the removal of the interior partitions seems to have occurred during the Hammerstein ownership. The ell features one room which now functions as a dining room; a door on the north wall of this room leads to the glassed-in porch; at the rear of the dining room is the kitchen. Floors in the main block and ell are pine; the floor of the kitchen is brick as is the floor of the sun porch.

The interior fireplace surrounds appear to have all been replaced during the Hammerstein ownership; the surrounds are all very fine, early nineteenth century mantels featuring elaborate trim. An article dating from 1948 ("Bucks County Homes" in The American Antiques Journal) noted that the fireplace mantel in the northern room of the main block (the living room during the Hammerstein tenure and is still used as a living room) "is an early Philadelphia piece". This same article stated that the Hammersteins purchased the elaborate cupboard (which still remains in the living room) from Louis Koch in London. Other interior changes which appear in photographs taken while the Hammersteins resided here include the bookshelves and fireplace mantle in the library (the southeast room of the main block), and the bookshelves and fireplace mantel in the second floor southeast room in the main block. All other interior trim in the house is very simple with eight inch baseboards and plain window and door moldings. Interior finish of walls and ceilings is plaster. Interior doors are six panel.

The carriage house and barn sit behind the house and appear to date from the mid-nineteenth century. The barn is a frame bank barn with a masonry first level now stuccoed. The barn also has a hay barn added to the northwest corner; the hay barn also is frame above with a masonry first level. A stone wall encloses the two other sides of the barnyard. The exterior of the barn is covered with asbestos shingles. Above the wagon doors is a cross gable which features (along with the main gable walls) a tripartite Palladian-type window. The carriage house sits south of the barn and is built on one level. It is two and a half stories and is deep enough for only one carriage. The carriage house also has a cross gable above its wagon doors which features an identical tripartite Palladian-type window.

Highland Farm retains the appearance of its period of significance, the years when Oscar Hammerstein II lived here. The Hammersteins' additions and changes (the rear porch addition and vestibule, the balustrade above the porch, the fireplace surrounds, the removal of interior partitions and the ornate cupboard) created the house which stands today.

NPS Counting Purposes: the farmhouse and the once free standing building over the root cellar count as two buildings.

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)

PERFORMING ARTS

Period of Significance

1940-1960

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Hammerstein, Oscar II

Architect/Builder

unknown

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

Highland Farm, Doylestown Township, Bucks County, is of national significance in the category of performing arts as the home of Broadway lyricist, Oscar Hammerstein II (1895-1960). According to the New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians, Hammerstein is considered "the most significant and influential author of musical plays" (1) for the years 1925 to 1959. Hammerstein's plays changed the course of musical theatre. Hammerstein's Show Boat (1927) was the first musical with a serious plot and Oklahoma! (1943) was the first musical "in which the story, dialogue, songs, ballet and ensembles were written into a single cohesive whole." (2) Due to Hammerstein's influence, integrated musicals with serious plots are now de rigueur on Broadway. Many of Hammerstein's songs, especially those written in collaboration with Richard Rodgers, his partner from 1943 to 1960, "have passed into the country's folkways." (3) Unlike the songs of many of his contemporaries, Hammerstein's works remain popular today, enjoying countless revivals including two recent releases in compact discs of South Pacific performed by the London Symphony with Kiri Te Kanawa and Carousel with Samuel Ramey accompanied by the Royal Philharmonic Orchestra. The King and I also had a successful revival on Broadway in 1985. Hammerstein, with Rodgers, also produced plays on Broadway from 1944 until his death in 1960. Producing was always a secondary interest for Hammerstein who concentrated most of his efforts on writing musicals.

Hammerstein was born in New York City, the son of William Hammerstein, a producer of musical shows, and the grandson of Oscar Hammerstein I (1846-1919) "one of the most significant American opera impresarios of the late nineteenth century and early twentieth." (4) Following his graduation from Columbia University where he both wrote and acted in university shows, Hammerstein immediately began his career as a writer for the theatre. He collaborated with such notables as Jerome Kern, Sigmund Romberg, and George Gershwin on musicals such as Wildflower (1923), Rose Marie (1924), Sunny (1925), Desert Song (1926), and The New Moon (1927). Hammerstein's most popular and critically acclaimed work, prior to his collaboration with Richard Rodgers, was Show Boat (1927) which had a musical score by Jerome Kern. It was an extremely successful show with both critics and the public.

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Following the success of Show Boat Hammerstein spent ten years writing musical motion pictures for Hollywood; later the 1930s were considered "a dark period for him." (5) In 1929, Hammerstein divorced his first wife, Mirna Finn,; shortly thereafter, he married Dorothy Blanchard, with whom he would spend the rest of his life.

In 1940, the Hammersteins purchased Highland Farm in Doylestown Township. The farm consisted of forty acres, which had been subdivided from a larger farm in 1848. Wilson Malone, who purchased this land in 1848, most likely built the house, barn and carriage house during his tenure which lasted until 1872. According to Hugh Fordin, Hammerstein's biographer, the Hammersteins bought the farm because Dorothy disliked their home in Great Neck, New York (they sold two houses to purchase the farm) and because Oscar wanted "'the peace and systematic' living that the country represented".(6) The Hammersteins kept an apartment in New York "where Dorothy spent the weekdays attending to her decorating business, Oscar stayed in Doylestown much of the week." (7) Hammerstein also had an office on Madison Avenue, "but Mr. Hammerstein did most of his work at his farm near Doylestown." (8). Both family members and historians agree that Hammerstein wrote the majority of his work at the farm.

Hammerstein was one of many New York celebrities to buy a farm in Bucks County during the 1930s and 1940s. An article in The American Antiques Journal declared in 1948 that "this section of Pennsylvania [Bucks County] has become a Mecca for artists, poets, novelists, playwrights, and musicians....No doubt it is the charm of these quaint old homes that has been the leading factor in drawing those...to this locality."(9) In addition to the Hammersteins, many other Broadway figures purchased houses here: S.J. Perlman, writer and playwright, and Dorothy Parker, writer, moved to Tinicum Township; George S. Kaufman, playwright and director, moved to Buckingham; Moss Hart, playwright moved to Aquetong in Solebury township. Writers such as Pearl S. Buck and James A. Michener also lived in Bucks County. While not the only Broadway figure or writer to move to Bucks County during the mid-twentieth century, Hammerstein was certainly one of the most popular and famous (Highland Farm is almost always featured in articles about Bucks County farmhouses owned by celebrities). Hammerstein also made the farm his primary residence, unlike many other New York figures who only used their Bucks County homes as weekend or country retreats.

For the next twenty years (the remainder of his life), Hammerstein worked at Highland Farm and collaborated with Richard Rogers (who worked on his farm in Fairfield, Connecticut); these years were the most important ones of Hammerstein's career. In 1943, Rodgers and Hammerstein's first work together, an adaptation of Lynn Riggs' play Green Grow the Lilies, opened on Broadway and played for a run of 2,212 performances to sold-out houses; the musical was Oklahoma! Hammerstein's inspiration for the lyrics to the opening song came from the stage directions by Riggs which included the images of cattle, corn and golden haze and "added some observations of his own based on his experience with beautiful mornings at Highland Farm." (10). The result was the song, "Oh What a Beautiful Morning", one of Rogers and Hammerstein's most popular works. The musical Oklahoma! is regarded by music historians as the first play which incorporated all the elements found in a musical into a unified body; it permanently changed the structure of Broadway musicals. H. Wiley Hickcock in Music in the United States: A Historical Introduction called Oklahoma! "a new form of American vernacular opera."(11)

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Hammerstein with his partner, Rodgers, followed their smash hit Oklahoma! with a string of Broadway hits, including Carousel (1945), South Pacific (1949), The King and I (1951), and The Sound of Music (1959).

Music historians praise Hammerstein's works "for their succinct dialogue and taut construction, as well as the excellence of their lyrics...[they] often display a simplicity and poetic freshness rare in the musical theatre."(12) The contribution which Hammerstein made to the field of performing arts is, perhaps, best summed up by Ronald L. Davis who wrote that Hammerstein:

helped change the direction of the musical stage, having produced some of the warmest, most sincere lyrics ever written for the musical theatre. Rodgers and Hammerstein...lifted the American musical theatre to a new artistic level, and proved the most influential force of their generation. (13)

In early 1960, Hammerstein was diagnosed with terminal cancer; Hammerstein told Rodgers "I'm just going down to Doylestown and stay on the Farm until I die." (14) Hammerstein died at Highland Farm on August 23, 1960. His obituary made the front page of the New York Times. The American Society of Composers, Authors and Publishers (ASCAP), the songwriters' performing rights organization, closed its offices for a day in tribute to a man who had been a member of its board of directors for twenty-one years. The entire Times Square area in New York City was blacked out, all traffic halted, and taps played in his honor. A crowd of 5,000 attended a brief ceremony in Times Square. It was described as the greatest tribute of its kind ever paid to one man. A similar tribute was paid to Hammerstein in London's West End theatre district.

The Oscar Hammerstein House still accurately reflects its period of significance: the twenty years during his ownership when he wrote his most popular and influential works here. The nineteenth century house was renovated under the direction of Oscar and Dorothy Hammerstein. According to ca.1940 photographs and articles on the Farm, the Hammersteins commissioned the substantial additions to the rear of the house and installed the ornate cupboard, fireplace mantels, and built the wood balcony atop the wraparound porch.

Hammerstein's long ownership and residence at Highland Farm, and the knowledge that he produced his best work here make this property the most significant property associated with one of the most influential American lyricists of the twentieth century, Oscar Hammerstein II.

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NOTES

- (1) Stanley Sadie, ed. The New Grove Dictionary of Music and Musicians vol. 8 (Washington, DC: Macmillan Publishers, Limited, 1980), 77.
- (2) John Tasker Howard, Our American Music (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1965), 740.
- (3) New York Times, August 23, 1960, 25.
- (4) Sadie, 77.
- (5) New York Times, 25.
- (6) Hugh Fordin, Getting to Know Him: A Biography of Oscar Hammerstein II (New York: Random House, 1977), 89.
- (7) Fordin, 177.
- (8) New York Times, 25.
- (9) H. Ogden Wintermute, "Bucks County Homes", The American Antiques Journal, August 1948, 12.
- (11) Fordin, 187.
- (12) H. Wiley Hickock, Music in the United States: A Historical Introduction (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, Inc.: 1974), 221.
- (13) H. Wiley Hickock and Stanley Sadie, ed. The New Grove Dictionary of American Music Volume Two (New York: Macmillan Press, Limited, 1986), 314.
- (14) Ronald L. Davis, A History of Music in American Life Volume III: The Modern Era, 1920-Present (Malabar, FL: Robert Krieger Publishing Co., 1981), 273.
- (15) Richard Rodgers, Musical Stages: An Autobiography (New York: Random House, 1975), 302.

9. Major Bibliographical References

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 4.9

UTM References

A

1	8
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4	9	0	4	4	0
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4	4	6	1	9	4	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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D

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

Current legal boundaries of property. The original farm was subdivided with the construction of the 202 bypass which now forms the southerly boundary of the nominated resource. Both the easterly and northerly boundaries are historic boundaries of the property; the eastern boundary is formed by East Road. The westerly boundary follows the subdivision of the property; the subdivided land is a separate tax parcel and contains no buildings associated with the nominated resource. See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jeffrey L. Marshall, Director of Hist. Pres.; Nancy Van Dolsen, Arch. Historian
organization Bucks County Conservancy date June 15, 1988
street & number 11 North Main Street telephone (215)345-8966
city or town Doylestown state PA zip code 18901

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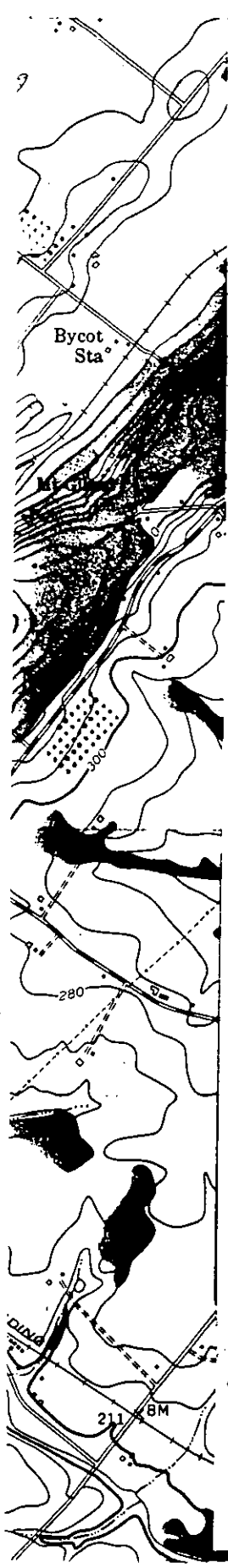
-
- Arnold, Denis ed. The New Oxford Companion to Music Volume 1: A-J. New York: Oxford University Press, 1983.
- Davis, Ronald L. A History of Music in American Life Volume III: The Modern Era, 1920-Present. Malabar, FL: Robert Krieger Publishing Company, 1981.
- Fordin, Hugh. Getting to Know Him: A Biography of Oscar Hammerstein II. New York: Random House, 1977.
- Green, Stanley. The Rodgers and Hammerstein Story. New York: The John Day Company, 1963.
- Hickock, H. Wiley. Music in the United States: A Historical Introduction. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall Inc. 1974.
- and Stanley Sadie. The New Grove Dictionary of Music Volume Two. New York: Macmillan Press Limited, 1986.
- Howard, John Tasker. Our American Music: A Comprehensive History from 1620 to the Present. New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Company, 1965.
- Laufe, Abe. Broadway's Greatest Musicals. New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1969.
- New York Times, August 23, 1960.
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- Rodgers, Richard. Musical Stages: An Autobiography. New York: Random House, 1975.
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- Taylor, Deems. Some Enchanted Evenings: The Story of Rodgers and Hammerstein. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1953.
- Trauch, W. Lester, "The Celebrity Era", Doylestown Daily Intelligencer, Bicentennial Supplement, September 1976.
- Wintermute, H. Ogden., "Bucks County Homes", The American Antiques Journal, August 1948.

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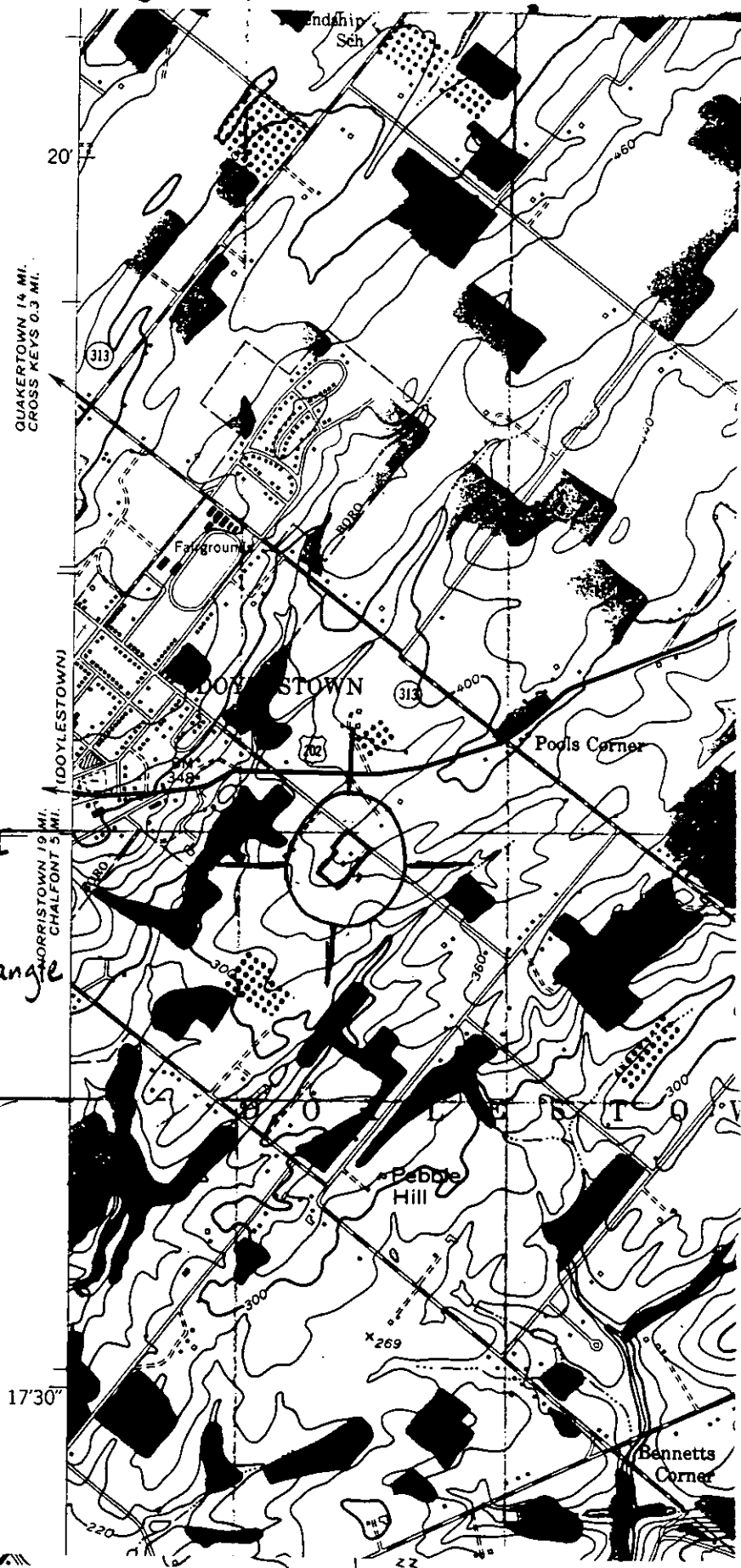
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BEGINNING at a point, a spike in the center line of East Road, TR-350 (33' wide), said point of beginning being a corner in line of lands now, or late of William Hammerstein; thence from said point of beginning, continuing along the center line of East Road, a distance of five hundred eighty and thirteen one-hundredths feet to a point, a corner, in line of lands now or late of Norman D. Milford, et ux; thence along line of lands now or late of "Milford", South forty-three degrees fifty-eight minutes fifty-five seconds West, a distance of eighty-eight and ninety-five one-hundredths feet to a point, an angle (an iron pin set); thence from said point, continuing along line of lands now or late of "Milford", South thirty-nine degrees thirty-five minutes West, a distance of six hundred forty-six and thirty-two one-hundredths feet to a point, an iron pin set in line of lands now or late of Dorothy Hammerstein; thence along line of lands now or late of Dorothy Hammerstein, North forty-eight degrees thirty minutes West, a distance of five-hundred sixty-eight and ninety-three one-hundredths feet to a point, an iron pin in line of lands now or late of William Hammerstein; thence along same, North forty-two degrees forty-five minutes East, a distance of two hundred feet to a point, an iron pin; thence North forty-eight degrees thirty minutes West a distance of three and fifty-five one-hundredths feet to a point, an iron pin; thence still along the same, North forty-two degrees forty-five minutes East, a distance of two hundred thirty-seven and ninety-three one-hundredths feet to a point, an iron pin; thence still along the same, North forty-six degrees West, a distance of forty-one and forty-five one-hundredths feet to an iron pin; thence still along the same, North forty-two degrees forty-five minutes East, a distance of two hundred ninety-six and five one-thousandths feet to a point in the center line of East Road, being the point and place of BEGINNING.



Oscar Hammerstein II
 Farm
 Bucks County
 Buckingham Quadrangle
 Zone 18
 Easting 4490440
 Northing 4461940



20'

QUAKERTOWN 14 MI.
 CROSS KEYS 0.3 MI.

DOYLESTOWN

MORRISTOWN 19 MI.
 CHALFONT 5 MI.

17'30"

Bennetts
 Corner