

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

USE THIS COPY
FOR DUPLICATING

1. Name of Property

historic name Swatara Furnace

other name/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: Old Forge Rd. (N/A) not for publication

city, town: Pine Grove Township (N/A) vicinity

state: PA code: PA county: Schuylkill code: 107 zip code: 17963

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private, public-state

Category of Property: district

Number of Resources within Property:

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
<u>2</u>	<u>—</u>	sites
<u>6</u>	<u>—</u>	structures
	<u>2</u>	objects
		TOTAL

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the
National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: Iron and Steel
Resources in Pennsylvania 1716-1945

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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 certifying 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 Keeper

Date
of action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

10 industry

01 domestic

01 domestic

Current functions

98 vacant/not in use

01 domestic

01 domestic

Subfunctions

10A manufacturing facility

01A single dwelling

01B multiple dwelling

Subfunctions

01A single dwelling

01B multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

90 mixed

other: 99 iron furnace

Materials

foundation	<u>40 stone</u>	roof	<u>N/A</u>
walls	<u>43 limestone</u>	other	<u>N/A</u>

Describe present and historic appearance:

see continuation sheet

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, C

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: 160 industry
030 architecture
110 engineering

Period(s) of Significance: 1830-1860

Significant Dates: 1830, c. 1860

Years of Alterations: _____

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/Builder: unknown

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

See continuation sheet

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Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1Swatara Furnace HD

The Swatara Furnace historic district is located in Pine Grove Township, Schuylkill County, on Mill Creek, approximately one quarter of a mile downstream from the present Lebanon Reservoir dam. Mill Creek is a tributary of Swatara Creek, and joins it approximately three quarters of a mile south near the village of Suedberg. The district is mostly wooded, and sits in a valley formed by the creek below the gap in Second Mountain. The principal elements of the district, which are located on both sides of Mill Creek are the furnace, the dam breast, the iron-master's mansion and barn, the foreman's house, and a double worker's house. Although there are no visible archaeological remains other than the races and wheel pit, enough of the plantation remains to suggest its configuration. There are two non contributing buildings in the district, a log cabin and the water control house for the City of Lebanon water department. Although located within the boundaries, neither greatly disturbs the overall layout and integrity of the district.

The principal structures in the district include (see map for corresponding location by number).

1. furnace 1830

The furnace is located approximately 150 feet south of Mill Creek. It is constructed of limestone with arches on the north, east and west facades. The stack is 29' 7" wide, 29' 8" deep, and approximately 22' tall. The bosh is 9' 2" in diameter. The wheel pit is still extant, and located to the northwest of the stack, and the race passage under the road is a masonry arch, still intact.

2. water control house (non contributing) c. 1960

This brick building is the City of Lebanon water control house, and is of recent brick construction, and measures approximately 25' by 22' in size.

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Swatara Furnace HD

3. dam breast c. 1850

This stone battered-wall dam breast was constructed to replace an earlier earthen dam which was apparently washed out during one of the periodic floods on the creek. This is one of the most unusual features of the historic district. Although a large section of the dam was swept away in the flood c. 1860, a substantial portion of the dam breast still remains on the northwest bank of the creek.

4. log cabin (non contributing) c. 1933

This simple single pen log cabin is one story, and does not contribute to the district.

5. ironmaster's mansion c. 1830, c. 1860, c. 1881, c. 1969

The western portion of the ironmaster's house was the original home. It is stone, two bays wide and two and a half stories, with six over six windows. The outline of the original entrance door is still evident in the facade. Around 1860 the eastern portion of the structure was added, and the main door relocated to that section. It is three bays wide, and four bays deep, forming an ell. This section is three and a half stories with six over six windows and with shutters. A frame two and a half story addition on the north end of this ell appears to be of similar vintage. When the property was purchased by Mahlon Boyer around 1881, he added the porch/veranda which wraps around the west, south and east facades of the mansion. Although this alters the appearance of the original house and the 1860 addition to some extent, their elements are still clearly distinguishable. In 1969 a stone one-story laundry room with flat roof was added to the rear of the 1830 structure. The property is presently being operated as a bed and breakfast.

6. barn c. 1860

The barn is frame with a gable roof, decorative barge boards, and three cupolas that function as ventilators. It has vertical wood siding. It is five bays wide and three bays deep, and is two and a half stories high.

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7. foreman's house c. 1830

The foreman's house is four bays wide and two bays deep. It is a stone, two and a half story house with stone quoins. The windows are shuttered, and are nine over six panes. The front door features a triangular pediment, pilasters, and a transom. Dormers were added at a later undetermined date. The building is L shaped with an enclosed rear porch on the west elevation.

8. worker's house - double c. 1830

This double house is constructed of stone, and is four bays wide by two bays deep. It is two and a half stories high. The windows on the second floor are nine over six panes, and the first floor are six over six. A porch spans the front facade of the building, and appears to be of recent vintage.

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Swatara Furnace Historic District, an iron plantation, is nominated under Criterion A for its association with the iron industry in Pennsylvania. Swatara Furnace is representative of iron plantations found in eastern and central Pennsylvania in the first half of the nineteenth century. Swatara was a significant regional furnace from 1830 until its demise c. 1860, but today it represents a small group of iron plantations in Pennsylvania which still retain industrial as well as residential elements. Under Criterion C, Swatara is significant in the area of engineering. The well preserved furnace stack and associated wheel pit embody distinctive characteristics of a nineteenth century iron furnace, and retain good integrity. In addition Swatara Furnace Historic district is notable under Criterion C for its architecture, particularly for the ironmaster's mansion, which is notable for its gradual enlargement and embellishment, and the overall quality of its construction. The manager's and double worker's houses are locally significant representatives of vernacular architecture.

Although the furnace ceased operations over 130 years ago, this district still provides a sense of the iron plantation, with industrial, managerial, and residential elements represented.

Dr. George N. Eckert and Simon (Simeon) Guilford established this furnace around 1830. It operated for a short time, and "then converted to a forge and foundry where once famous Swatara stoves were cast and finished." Dr. Eckert was originally from Womelsdorf, and moved to Pine Grove in 1828. He was a member of the 30th. Congress, and President of the Lorberry Railroad which ran near the furnace. Guilford was born in Northampton, Massachusetts in 1801, and had worked as a civil engineer on the Erie Canal. In 1823 he moved to Lebanon County where he served as assistant engineer in the construction of the Union Canal. By 1830 he and Eckert had acquired some 15,383 acres of prime timber land and started construction of the furnace. The iron ore and limestone needed for the furnace was shipped up the Union Canal from Lebanon County to the nearby town of Suedberg, and the finished products shipped out in the same way.

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Swatara Furnace HD

Later, numerous outcroppings of coal in the valley were purported to have been used as fuel, presumably just for the forge. The principal products of Swatara were stoves and iron chain. Although it is not known for certain when the furnace and forge ceased operation, the most predominant theory is that a flood c. 1860 severely damaged the dam and wiped out the forge, and the furnace ceased operation at that time. Other accounts suggest that the furnace was abandoned c. 1855, and the forge in 1861.

In 1881 the ironmaster's house and several other houses in the complex on the north side of Mill Creek were acquired by Mahlon Boyer, who had come to the area in 1872. Boyer had accumulated thousands of acres of timber land. He did not operate a forge, but operated several sawmills on the property. The mansion and buildings are still in the Boyer family, who operate a bed and breakfast in the mansion.

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Swatara Furnace HD

Barr, Capt. J.W. Biographical Notes of Pine Grove, 1841-1916.
Pine Grove: Anderson & Reber, 1916.

Grumbine, W.T. "Swatara Furnace/The Ironmaster's Mansion." ms.
1991.

History of Schuylkill County. New York: W. W. Munsell, 1881.

Rupp, I. Daniel. History of Northampton, Lehigh, Monroe, Carbon
and Schuylkill Counties. Lancaster: G. Hills, 1845.

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Swatara Furnace HD

Verbal boundary description: Swatara Furnace Historic District begins at the point where Old Forge Road crosses Mill Creek, thence south 150' to a point, thence west 1400', thence northeast 600' crossing a dirt road (which leads to the Lebanon Reservoir dam), thence 2200' east to a point, thence south 150' to Old Forge Road, thence west 1200' along the north side of Old Forge Rd. to a point, thence south along said road to the point of beginning at Mill Creek.

Boundary justification: Swatara Furnace Historic District includes all elements known to have been associated with the furnace, including the breast of the dam which provided water power for the races to the wheel pit.

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All photos: Swatara Furnace Historic District
Old Forge Rd.
Pine Grove Township, Schuylkill County, PA
date of photographs: 2/2/90; 1980
photographer: Diane B. Reed, PHMC/BHP; Economic
Development Council of Northeast Pennsylvania
negatives: PHMC/BHP

photo key

- A. furnace stack
camera points southwest
- B. furnace stack
camera points north
- C. wheel pit
camera points north
- D. battered wall dam
camera points west
- E. ironmaster's mansion
camera points north
- F. ironmaster's mansion
camera points northwest
- G. ironmaster's mansion
camera points southeast
- H. ironmaster's mansion
camera points west
- I. barn
camera points east
- J. foreman's house
camera points north

9. Major Bibliographical ReferencesX See continuation sheetPrevious 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:

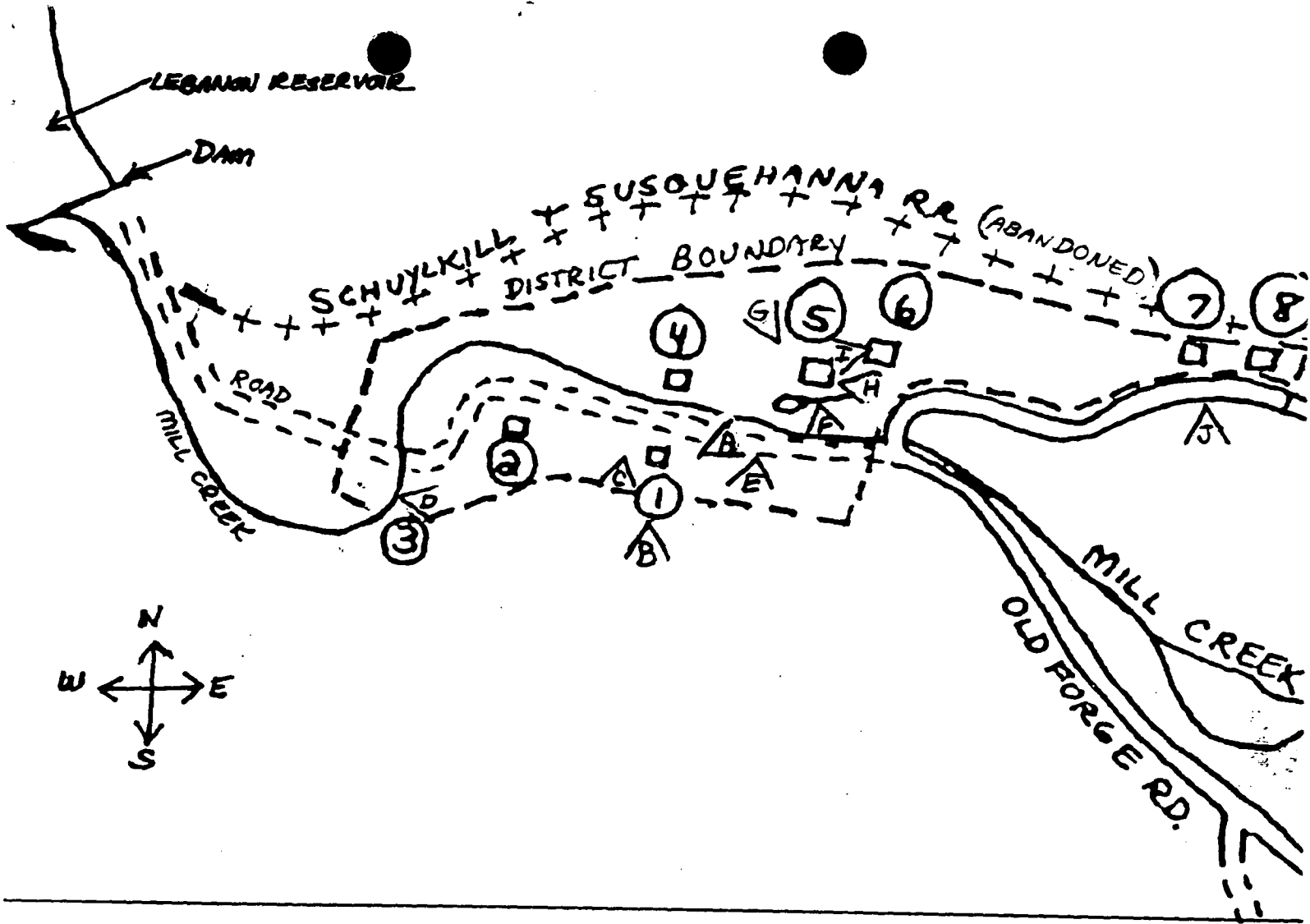
- X State Historic Preservation Office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other - Specify Repository: _____

10. Geographical DataAcreage of property: 20 acres

UTM References: Pine Grove

	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>		<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
A	18	373540	4488950	C	18	373880	4488930
B	18	374280	4488930	D	18	373440	4488820

 see continuation sheetVerbal Boundary DescriptionX see continuation sheetBoundary JustificationX see continuation sheet11. Form Prepared Byname/title Diane B. Reed, Historic Preservation Specialistorganization PHMC/BHP date March 21, 1991street & number P.O. Box 1026 telephone (717)787-8045city or town Harrisburg state PA zip 17108



SWATARA FURNACE HISTORIC DISTRICT

- | | |
|--|----------------------------|
| 1. Swatara Furnace | 5. Ironmaster's mansion |
| 2. City of Lebanon Water Control
(non-contributing) | 6. Barn |
| 3. Dam breast | 7. Foreman's house |
| 4. log cabin (non-contributing) | 8. Worker's house (double) |

SWATARA TURNACE
HISTORIC DISTRICT

SCHUYLKILL COUNTY

PINE GROVE

ZONE 18

(A)

E 373540
N 4488950

(B)

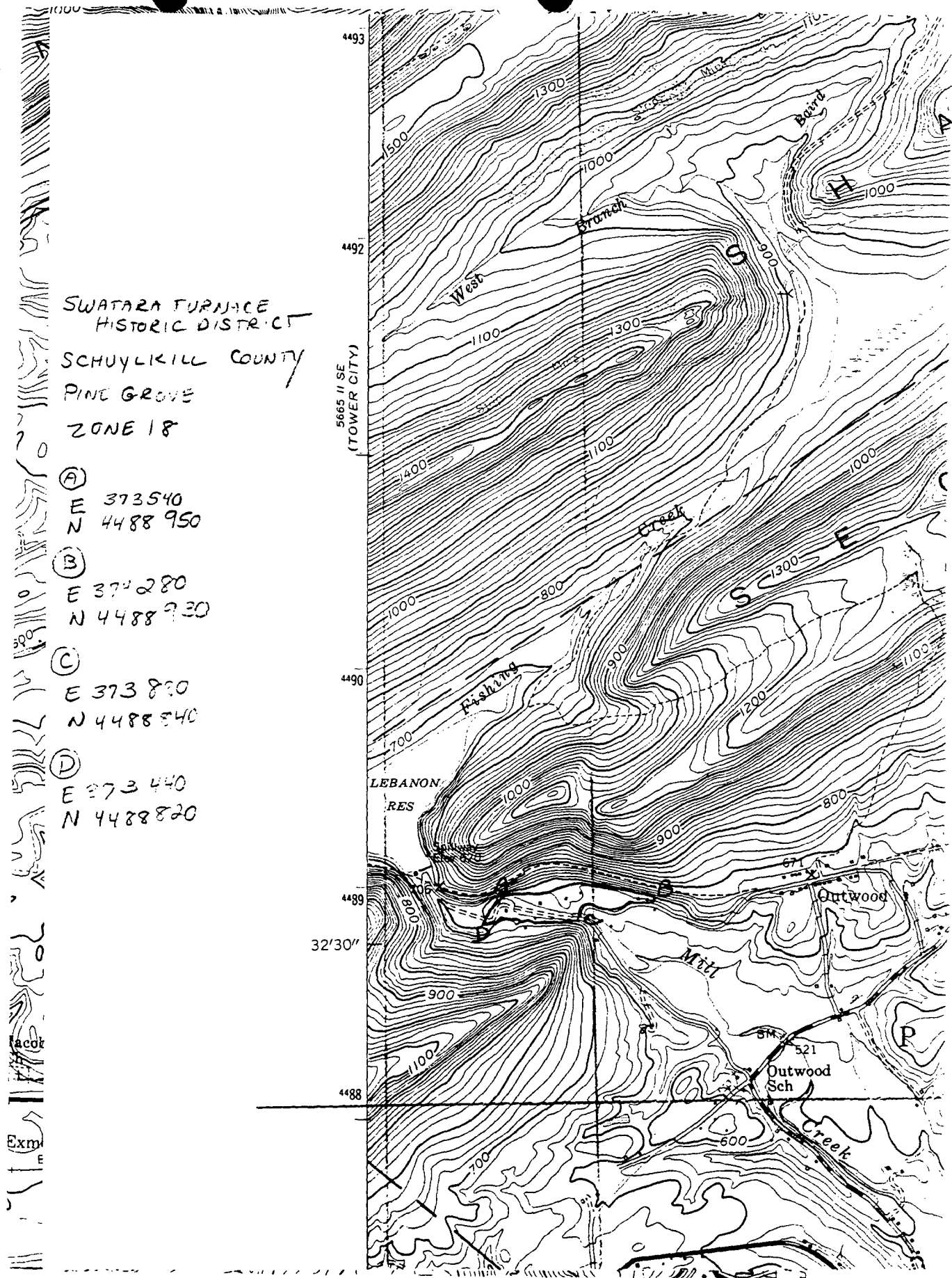
E 374280
N 4488730

(C)

E 373800
N 4488540

(D)

E 373440
N 4488820



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