

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

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NATIONAL REGISTER

HISTORIC

PRESERVATION

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions and 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 Collen Brook Farm  
other names/site number Collenbrook

2. Location

street & number private drive off Mansion & Marvine Roads N/A not for publication  
city, town Upper Darby Township N/A vicinity  
state Pennsylvania code PA county Delaware code 045 zip code 19082

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
<u>3</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> sites
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> structures
<u>    </u>	<u>    </u> objects
<u>3</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 Dr. Brent Glass, Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

Date 11-18-88

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:)

Silver Byers

Entered in the National Register

12/22/88

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

## 6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
DOMESTIC/secondary structures

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling  
DOMESTIC/secondary structures

## 7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other: Georgian Center Hall Plan  
COLONIAL

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls stone

roof asphalt

other wood

### Describe present and historic physical appearance.

This eighteenth century farmstead presently consists of three buildings located on 7.3 lightly wooded acres, surrounded by modern residential subdivisions. The Collen Brook, for which the original 250 acre property was named, runs just inside the north and west boundaries of the parcel. Situated on a knoll looking south towards the Old State Road is the stone main house. This farmhouse is a 2 1/2 storey, 6 bay, double pile vernacular residence with Federal interior detailing and a Georgian center hall plan. Built out of gneiss, the house was constructed in three phases. The first section, a single room over a single room, was built ca. 1700 and now forms the kitchen (northwest) section. In 1774 the building had a room over room addition made to the southern elevation. The house had the center hall and eastern two storey section added in 1794. Lastly, the small powder room and utility/sunroom were added in the 1920s. Also on the property are two outbuildings. The 1782 granite springhouse is 2 storey (banked), single bay, single pile and straddles a spring/tributary of Collen Brook. East of the main house is a ca. 1870 stone and frame carriage house, now converted to a garage. All the outbuildings reflect their rural past and have retained a high degree of integrity.

The main house's sections, as described above and as shown on the attached floor plans, now form the northwest (rear, ca. 1700), the southwest (1774) and eastern (1794) sections. The latter section is the largest, forming the eastern half of the house. The main facade faces approximately south and is constructed of coursed, dressed ashlar; the remaining elevations are of fieldstone covered with stucco (except where recently removed on the southwest.) Eighteenth and nineteenth century family descriptions indicate that the building has been similarly stuccoed since 1794. There are three interior chimneys: one at each gable and one in the center rear (northwest) gable of the ca. 1700 kitchen section. The roof is of asphalt shingle laid over hand-split cedar shakes. The eaves are closed with simple box cornices. On the southern slope of the roof there are 2 segmental arch dormers with pilasters and roundhead 6/6 windows.

The main (south) facade is 6 bay and has paired, centered plank doors, each with a 4-light transom. A butt joint shows in the masonry between the doors, on the first floor only. The windows on the first and second floors are 6/9 and there is a pent eave footing running across the entire facade just under the second floor window sills. The first floor windows have beveled 3-panel shutters with early hardware and plain wood surrounds and sills. This facade also has a ca. 1870 open porch, probably replacing an earlier pent eave. The porch's cedar-shingled hip roof is supported by 9 square

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beveled wooden columns with square plinths and piercework brackets. The southwest end of the porch is banked, the stone foundation concealing a root cellar which runs half the length of the porch.

The wide east elevation has a half moon datestone, "A.L./1794," inset at the peak, and paired 3/3 gablets with plain rectilinear wooden frames and sills. Double piled, it has two 6/9 windows on the first floor which have beveled single panel shutters with original hardware. The rear (north) irregular facade faces Collen Brook. The eastern half is 3 bays; the easternmost bay has 6/9 windows and shutters identical to those described on the east elevation above. The second bay's 1794 first floor window has been converted to a door which leads into the small 1920s single pile powder room. The powder room's hipped roof extends across the third bay to form a hood for the 1794 plank door. Above this roof is a 6/6 window with plain rectilinear wood surround and sill which lights the interior stairway. The northwest section (ca. 1700) of the rear facade is gable end on and 2 bays across. This section has a more ornate box cornice than those on the other elevations, 6/9 windows with plain rectilinear wooden surrounds and sills and no shutters, and paired quarter-round gablets. Attached to this rear (northwest) gable is a 2 storey, single bay 1920s addition with shed roof. The first floor of this small addition is a stucco over stone utility room while the second floor is a frame, clapboarded sun room. The fenestration of this addition is a 6-light casement window on each floor of the east elevation and north facade.

This 1920s addition also forms the northern bay on the west elevation, with a single pane window on the first floor and a 3 casement unit of 6 lights each on the second floor. The center portion of the west elevation is the original 3 bay facade of the ca. 1700 section. It has stone ends and first floor and frame second storey whose overhang creates a first floor covered porch with 2 square wooden posts. The 6/6 windows (1 on the first floor, 2 on the second) have plain rectilinear wooden surrounds and sills, as does the plain, beaded plank door. The southern 2 bays of the west elevation are the gable end of the 1774 section, which clearly showed the outline of a bakeoven scar until its recent repointing. This 1774 section has 2/2 paired gablets with single 6/9 windows on the first and second floors. The west end of the front facade's open porch has double bulkhead doors leading to the root cellar.

The interior layout became a center hall plan with the construction of the 1794 section. This section (hall and east rooms) is the only part of the house to have any basement; under this section is a full cellar with 2 corbelled supports for the corner hearths above.

The northwest rear (kitchen) is the oldest section and is two steps lower than the rest of the floor. (This difference in level is repeated in the second floor and attic.) This ca. 1700 section has a walk-in fireplace with window (both now covered over with fiberboard), wide random flooring, exposed beaded joists and chair rails. The exterior doors are beaded plank, 3 planks wide, and the interior door to the 1774 section is 6-panel. All doors have

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original hardware and fillet and ogee wooden surrounds. The southwest (front) room, part of the 1774 section, has a centered interior gable fireplace with built-in cupboard on its north side and wooden paneled mantel with 3 reeded pilasters supported by an echinus ovolo and fascia surround. In addition, this room also has wide random flooring, chair rails, a 3- and 1-panel double doored cupboard in the southwest corner, and a 6-panel door with 4-light transom (now covered with fiberboard) leading into the hall.

The 1794 section contains the hall and east rooms. The hall interior and southeast (front) room have wide Doric eared window and door surrounds faced with beveled 3-panel reveals. The interior doors are all 6-panel, while the two hall exterior doors are 18th century plank with early hardware. The stairs are closed stringer with beveled panels below, wooden bellflower applique on each riser end. Urn-and-column turned balusters support a handrail which is mirrored by a chair rail supported by Doric pilasters. The southeast (front) room has heavier and more ornate decorative trim than the northeast (rear) room; the former has a corner fireplace with a wooden 3-part reeded plaque and pilaster mantel with Grecian urn appliques. The overmantel has a central Doric eared and beaded frame flanked by rectangular beaded panels and topped by an ovolo-cavetto-torus crown moulding. Other features in this room include chair rails and, in the interior corner, a built-in cupboard with dentil fretwork, pilasters, Roman arch with keystone, double-doored (4 lights each) opening, butterfly shelves and a pull-out writing shelf. The northeast (rear) room has a corner fireplace with a 3-panel Doric eared mantel and beveled 3-panel overmantel.

In the second floor of the 1794 section, the hall and southeast (front) room have Doric eared surrounds and 6-panel doors similar to the first floor. The front room also has chair rails and a corner fireplace with wooden gouge-work mantel and a full bevel panel overmantel. The northeast (rear) room has a corner fireplace with a plain wooden rectilinear surround, mantel shelf and chair rails. The front of the second floor hall and part of the southwest section have been partitioned off in the 20th century to form bathrooms. The remainder of the southwest (1774) section has fillet and ogee window and door surrounds and a centered gable end fireplace with gougework mantel. The second floor of the northwest (rear, ca. 1700) section has been partitioned into 2 bedrooms; the west one has a fireplace with a very plain fascia surround. All interior walls and ceilings (except in the kitchen) are smoothly plastered. All woodwork is painted white. The full attic has numbered and pegged rafters and collar beams but no ridgepoles. Part of the attic is partitioned with old beaded boards.

There are two additional buildings on the property, both of which are contributing. Northeast of the main house, astride a spring which becomes a northern tributary of Collen Brook, is an 18th century two storey, banked, single bay, single pile stone springhouse with large quoins, a cedar shingle gable roof and a rectangular datestone, "A L/1782," at the south gable peak. East of the main house (and facing southeast) is a ca. 1870 2 storey, 2 bay, single pile stucco over stone and frame carriage house. This building has

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a hip roof with central brick chimney, 4-light casement windows (2 on upper front facade, 1 each on rear and southwest elevations), exterior centered chimney on rear (northwest) wall and one room stucco over stone hip roof tack room. In the 20th century, this building was converted to a garage and an additional shed roof parking bay of stucco over cement block and frame was built against the northeast elevation. Although altered for modern vehicle use, the carriage house is still a contributing structure. It retains much of its original form, fenestration, materials, design (such as the loft door on the upper front storey), and layout.

Collen Brook Farm still reflects its rural origins because of the few changes made since 1794 to the extant structures. The main house's first section was built ca. 1700 by Welsh Quaker immigrant Ralph Lewis and was expanded in 1774 by his grandson, Abraham Lewis II. Reflecting the resurgent prosperity of southeastern Pennsylvania after the Revolution, great-grandson Abraham Lewis III added the eastern half of the house in 1794. Except for the minor modifications made for bathroom space and the small 1920s utility/sun room addition, there were no further changes. These minimal changes have not altered the fabric, layout or materials of the house. Therefore, they have not damaged its exterior or interior integrity nor its eligibility for Register status.

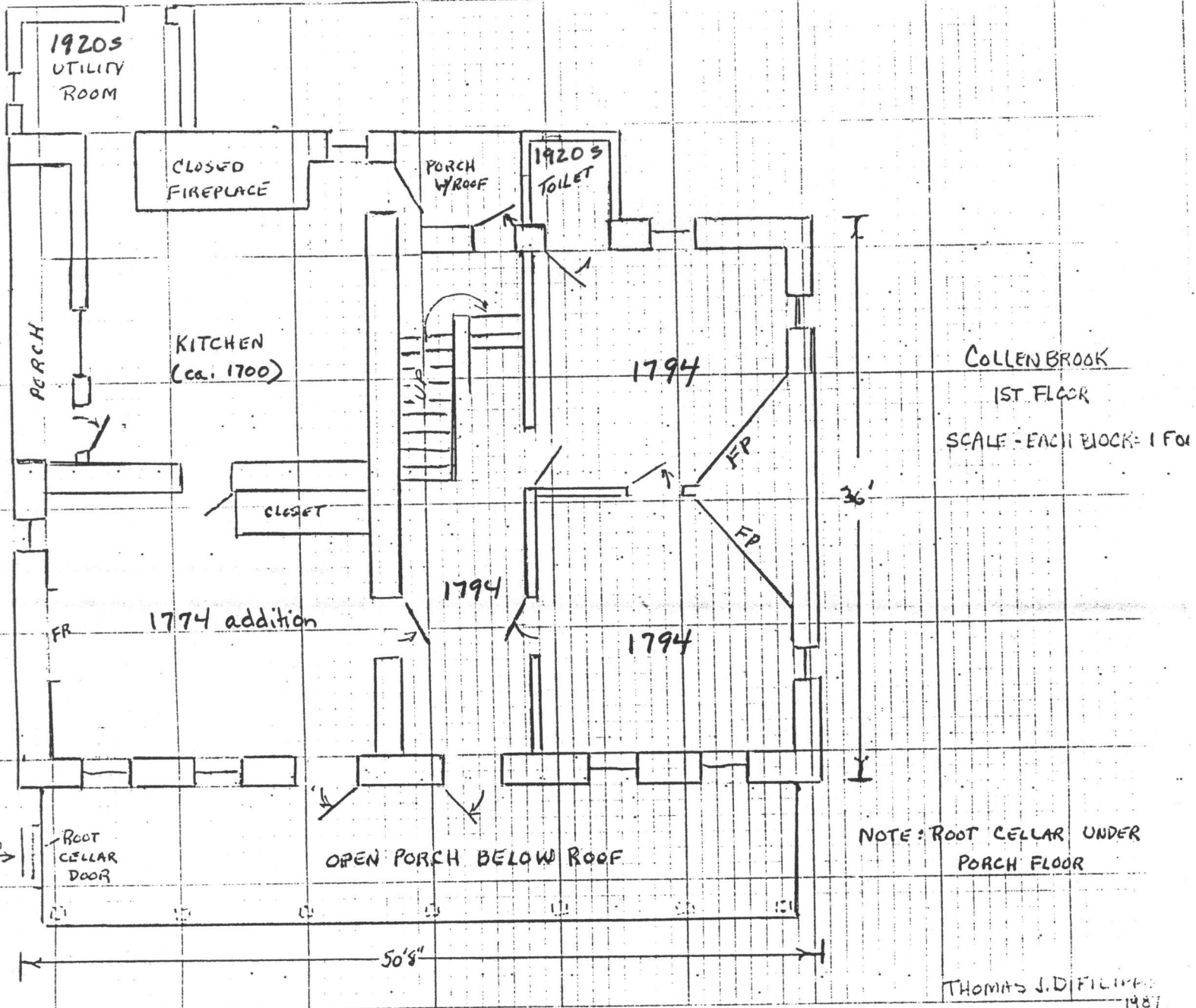
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**8. Statement of Significance**

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) N/A  A  B  C  D  E  F  G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

education  
architecture

Period of Significance

1829-1882  
ca. 1700, 1774, 1794

Significant Dates

ca. 1700, 1774,  
1794

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

Smith, George

Architect/Builder

Lawrence, Mordecai, carpenter, 1794  
section

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

Collen Brook Farm is significant under criteria B for the association with George Smith (1804-1882), an educator and political leader. He has statewide importance as the principal designer and compiler of the 1834 and the 1836 Pennsylvania Education Acts, which first created and secondly consolidated and defined the statewide public educational system. This educational/political work, along with his many other local civic pursuits, was undertaken during his residency on this property and therefore this site is the best resource connected with his endeavors.

Collen Brook Farm is also architecturally significant as a prime example of the affluent Quaker country seat, plain but well-crafted in the vernacular Georgian style. It is representative of an eighteenth century farmstead expanded to become a Georgian center hall plan house with Federal detailing. In plan, detailing and overall vernacular appearance, Collen Brook Farm is a well preserved representative of a type of c. 1800 farmhouse found in Delaware County. Few examples with this level of integrity still exist.

Lastly, this property is significant for the craftsmanship of the interior with its notable mantels, mouldings, window and door surrounds, and built-in cupboard. All this is the work of Mordecai Lawrence, a master carpenter practicing in the area during the latter eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. The work at this site is, at present, the only effort that is known to be Lawrence's. (A draft of this building's 1794 addition giving elevations, floor plans and detailing in Lawrence's hand and with his signature has been duplicated and filed with the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.) The survival of this high quality carpentry work makes this property noteworthy and eligible under criteria C.

One of the few Pennsylvania properties to remain in the hands of direct descendants from 1692 to the present, Collen Brook Farms is an outstanding visual reminder of the rural past, when gentlemen farmers played a major cultural and political role in the Commonwealth. Its most notable owner, George Smith, is a significant example of this type of citizen. He was born at "Narberth" on Naylor's Run, Haverford Township, in 1804, but he lived at Collen Brook Farm from the time of his marriage in 1829 until his death. Smith was graduated from the University of Pennsylvania Medical School in

See continuation sheet

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Ashmead, Henry Graham. HISTORY OF DELAWARE COUNTY,... Phila., L. H. Everts & Co., 1884; facsimile reprint, 1968.  
 Chester County, PA. Archives. Deed books & wills of Lewis & Smith families.  
 Delaware County, PA. Deed books & wills o Lewis & smith families.  
 Delaware County Historical Society, Chester, PA. Mss. files & 1798 Direct Tax.  
 Haverford Township Historical Society, Haverford, PA. Tax & property records for Mordecai Lawrence. (Courtesy of Mrs. Robert H. Johnston)  
 Hazard, Samuel et al. HAZARD'S REGISTER OF PENNSYLVANIA. 16 vols. Phila., 1828-35. For the contemporary records of the Committees on Education in the PA Legislature.  
 LAWS OF PENNSYLVANIA. 1833-34, Act #102 and 1835-36, Act #166.  
 McCadden, Joseph J. EDUCATION IN PENNSYLVANIA, 1801-1835... Phila., Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 1937.  
 Mulhern, James. A HISTORY OF SECONDARY EDUCATION IN PENNSYLVANIA. Phila., the author, 1933.

See continuation sheet

- Previous documentation on file (NPS): N/A
- 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 (County)
  - University
  - Other

Specify repository:  
Delaware County Planning Dept.  
Media, PA

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property 4.9 acres

UTM References

A 18 | 472 | 560 | 4422210  
 Zone Easting Northing

C | | | |

B | | | |  
 Zone Easting Northing

D | | | |

See continuation sheet

**Verbal Boundary Description**

The boundary of the Collen Brook Farm nomination is shown as the striped area on the accompanying map entitled "Upper Darby Township, Delaware County, PA Zoning Map #12, April 2, 1986" and drawn at the scale of 1 inch equals 200 feet.

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**Boundary Justification**

North, east and west boundaries follow that of the present tax parcel. The southern boundary is drawn 150 feet south of the main building. The nominated area includes all buildings, the stream and structure-related space. The 2.45 acres not nominated are scrub woodland which has grown up on the old farm fields. The nominated area is surrounded by R-1 zoning of single family residences.

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**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Nancy V. Webster, Senior Planner (plans by Thomas J. Di Filippo)  
 organization Delaware County Planning Dept. date June 12, 1988  
 street & number Second & Orange Streets telephone 215-891-5200  
 city or town Media state PA zip code 19063

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1826 and practiced medicine for five years, retiring from that profession to manage the large family farms and to pursue various cultural and educational interests. He had an abiding concern for education and was influenced in this by his father (Benjamin Hayes Smith, teacher and a State Representative) and by his father-in-law (Abraham Lewis III, who had been active in Quaker education and in establishing the 1799 Haverford Seminary).

George Smith was elected State Senator for Chester/Delaware Counties in 1832 and immediately became involved in forming a public or common school system, as it was then called. At the time of his election, earlier attempts to establish public education had been so soundly defeated that most advocates had given up in the face of such widespread and violent opposition. Dr. Smith had long been a supporter of the educational reform movement. He reorganized fellow supporters in the legislature and, as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Education, drew up a new bill establishing a statewide general system of education. Smith convinced the powerful Thaddeus Stevens to back this bill and the two men lobbied intensively. Smith's bill passed into law on April 1, 1834 (PA Act #102).

Smith's advocacy made him the focal point of public attacks. Most of the resistance to public education came from those who were well-to-do, from citizens of Germanic background and from the taxpayers of several large cities (who were already paying for municipal schools). "The law was chiefly opposed as an undue and undemocratic interference with the rights of families in the education of children, and an unjustifiable burden upon the taxpayers of the State." (Mulhern, p. 477) Despite the long and continued controversy, Senators George Smith and Samuel Breck (of Philadelphia) were able to prevent a revocation of the Education Act during the 1835 session of the General Assembly.

Aware of the need to consolidate and amend the preliminary legislation, Dr. George Smith continued in his capacity as Chairman of the Senate Committee on Education to strengthen the existing measures. Smith designed, and persuaded his Committee to introduce, a further bill which enlarged and stated more clearly the powers and duties of school directors, the salaries of teachers, the age range of students, permitted educational expenses and the like. At a time when similar revisions were being defeated, Smith rallied enough political support by the reasoned completeness of his proposal to win passage of this second bill into law on June 13, 1836 (PA Act #166).

The animosity George Smith aroused by his actions led to his defeat in the next election, but he received recognition of his service from Governor Joseph Ritner. The Governor appointed Smith as an Associate Judge on the Delaware County bench in December 1836, although Smith was not a lawyer. The judge was reelected twice. George Smith was further rewarded by having his "home" school district of Upper Darby designated as the first formed under the state law and he served as President of its Board for twenty-five years. He also was elected as the first Delaware County Superintendent of Common Schools.

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These two Education Acts, of which Smith was the primary compiler and promoter, formed the first public school code and changed the social and educational history of the Commonwealth forever. Much of his research, writing and persuasion (by entertainment and by letter) took place from his home at Collen Brook Farm. While many educational reforms had been proposed, only George Smith's two bills achieved the requisite political support for enactment. His ability to address the issues clearly and to win for his bills the advocacy of persons such as Stevens and Breck proves Smith's major role in the passage of the landmark legislation of 1834 and 1836. (The Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission recently recognized George Smith's significance in this matter by approving a state marker citing his central role in the Education Acts. The marker is placed at Collen Brook Farm.)

Dr. Smith also combined being a gentleman farmer with the promotion of natural science, researching and writing numerous papers on local geology, agriculture and wildlife. He encouraged general education through these publications, including the first (1862) and still the most complete history of Delaware County, and through founding the Delaware County Institute of Science in 1833. Dr. Smith's interest in incorporating natural science and local history into public education was reflected in a long series of scientific, educational, cultural and political activities which he pursued during his residency at Collen Brook Farm.

This property is a prime example of the vernacular Georgian farmstead, a housing style once common but now difficult to find in Delaware County with this degree of integrity. While much of the farm's original 250 acres has been converted to the residential subdivisions of Aronomink and Drexel Hill, the remaining nominated acreage and buildings retain a visual impact little changed from the late eighteenth century. A small 2 storey stone house was built ca. 1700 on this property by Welsh Quaker immigrant Ralph Lewis and was sold in 1712 to his son Samuel. Ralph's grandson, Abraham Lewis II, owned the parcel in 1774 when he added the 2 storey section which now forms the southwest corner of the house. The Lewises were prosperous landowners, millers and sawyers in eastern Delaware County throughout the eighteenth century. Great-grandson Abraham Lewis III inherited Collen Brook Farm in 1775; he built the banked stone springhouse (1782) and the eastern half of the main house (1794). His only daughter Mary married George Smith in 1829, when the combined Lewis and Smith farms they had inherited made them the largest landowners in Delaware County.

Collen Brook Farm was the home of George and Mary (1808-1892) Smith during their lifetimes and they built the ca. 1870 carriage house and large barn (now converted to a residence and subdivided from the original parcel). After Mrs. Smith's death, her unmarried daughter Margaretta lived here until 1915, after which the property was rented sporadically. George

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Smith's granddaughter, Mrs. William Easby Jr., lived in Collen Brook Farm from 1924 to 1957. Her engineer husband probably had the bathroom modifications made, the carriage house converted and the small utility/ sun room addition built. The property has been owned by the Smith family and rented from 1957 to the present.

Although Delaware County was settled early and therefore has numerous surviving 18th century buildings, Collen Brook Farm (after its 1794 remodelling) was and is an important vernacular structure in the region. According to the 1798 Direct Tax, it was one of the largest and most luxurious mansions in Delaware County. The house is representative of the ca. 1800 homes of wealthy rural landowners and it has retained its integrity while other such buildings have been demolished or unsympathetically remodelled and expanded.

An extensive survey of Upper Darby Township, eastern Delaware County and western Philadelphia has located a handful of extant resources to which Collen Brook Farm can be compared for context. Thornfield House (3218 Garrett Road, Upper Darby), home of millowner Thomas Garrett, was greatly expanded ca. 1800 into a vernacular center hall plan home. While close to the same size (51 x 36 ft.) as Collen Brook and retaining its Georgian floor plan, Thornfield's interior and exterior were substantially remodelled ca. 1868 and ca. 1906. Whitby Hall (Tunbridge Road, Haverford, 045-HA-24) is a 6 bay Georgian center hall mansion built in 1754 at Kingsessing (Philadelphia) for James Coultas, High Sheriff, merchant and ship owner. Once a fine example of high style Georgian with Federal details, most of Whitby Hall's interiors were sold to the Detroit Museum of Art. Its layout, detailing, fenestration and mass sustained major alterations before and after being moved to Haverford Township in 1922.

The Leedom Mansion (570 Mill Road, Haverford, 045-HA-15, Pennsylvania Inventory) has a vernacular exterior similar to Collen Brook, as it was built in two sections (ca. 1750 and ca. 1800) and is 5 bays with a center hall. However, the interior layout remained asymmetrical, never had the delicate proportions and crafted detail of the Lewis-Smith home and, lastly, has only fair integrity today. The last extant contemporary of Collen Brook Farm's in the area is the Van Leer House (700 Hedgerow Lane, Marple, 045-MA-22). This building was remodelled to a 2½ storey, 5 bay center hall plan ca. 1792-1800. It compares unfavorably, as the house has been repeatedly altered in floor plan, detailing, fenestration and general appearance since 1800. Currently, it has been made into small apartments and is quite deteriorated.

Only three other center hall plan houses exist in Upper Darby, none of which matches Collen Brook Farm in period, floor plan or inte-

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grity. "Hoodland" (76 S. State Road, Upper Darby) was built 1823-24 by John Sellers II. After a severe fire gutted the structure in the 1870s, it was completely rebuilt. Today, with many additions and internal changes, it serves as the Sellers Public Library. The Burnley Mansion (off Bishop Avenue, Upper Darby) is center hall plan but was built in 1840-1860, is vernacular Federal and has been much modernized and altered recently. The Alvin Kennels house (831 Providence Road, Upper Darby) is a stone 5 bay center hall farmhouse built ca. 1830 and remodelled ca. 1850 with many Gothic details. Besides being a completely different period from the Lewis-Smith property, this building is soon to be demolished and replaced by a CVS.

"Pont Reading" (2713 Haverford Avenue, Haverford, 045-HA-18, National Register) is the last of the extant buildings with any major similarities to Collen Brook Farm. An elegant country seat of the Humphreys family, Pont Reading's 5 bay center hall plan section was built twenty years after Collen Brook and is not vernacular Georgian but high style Federal within and without. This home also is a series of unintegrated additions (1683, 1730, 1783) whose floor plan is quite unlike the Lewis-Smith mansion.

Thus, Collen Brook Farm is representative of the rural gentry's vernacular Georgian mansions with Federal detailing, and it is one of the few surviving examples in the eastern Delaware County area. In contextual comparison with the properties cited above, it is also the best preserved in regards to original materials, massing, fenestration, layout and interior detail and finishings.

In addition to Collen Brook Farm's significance in the general context of the extant built environment, it is also interesting for the high quality and craftsmanship of the Federal detailing and woodwork. This work was done, and remains unaltered, as part of the 1794 addition and integration of the older sections. The variety and delicacy of the classical details, mantels, panelling, surrounds, appliques and stairway are notable in comparison with the regional work of the period. They are also notable in that the craftsman who did the work is identifiable. Mordecai Lawrence (fl. 1780-1830), kinsman to Abraham Lewis III's wife Rebecca Lawrence, was the master carpenter. While woodwork at other properties has been attributed to him, for example the Powell-Lawrence House (Lawrence and Sproul Roads, Marple, 045-MP-77, work done 1801-1802) and the Lawrence Homestead (1901 Lawrence Road, Haverford, 045-HA-55, work done 1823), Collen Brook Farm is the only provable and the earliest example of his work. Local tax and property records make it clear that Mordecai Lawrence prospered in his profession and by 1803 he had expanded his business to owning a sawmill, a woodworking shop and to employing

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others while continuing himself as a carpenter. Further facts about him are elusive, but the woodwork at Collen Brook Farm and the two attributed houses has been praised by Smithsonian and Winterthur experts.

Because of Collen Brook's interior integrity, its detailing clearly demonstrates the 18th century concept of differentiation of living space into public and private areas. In the public entertainment space (front pile of parlor, hall, dining room and visitors' bedrooms), the panelling, chair rails, mantels and surrounds are larger and more ornate. In the private family living space ( rear pile of withdrawing room, kitchen and family bedrooms), these same elements exist but are much narrower and simpler. As can be determined from the above contextual comparison, these once common status differentiations have been obliterated at other extant period structures in the region.

Collen Brook Farm is therefore significant under criteria B for the association with George Smith and the Pennsylvania Education Acts of 1834 and 1836. It is further significant under criteria C as the best surviving example in the area of a ca. 1800 vernacular Georgian mansion with Federal details and as a prime example of local master carpentry by a known artisan.

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 1

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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Collen Brook Farm

Section number \_\_\_\_\_ Page 1 Photographs

The following information remains the same for all photographs:

Collen Brook Farm

Delaware County

PC: Nov. 27, 1987

PC: Nancy Webster

NL: Delaware County Planning Department, Media, PA.

The photo views of the numbered photos are as follows:

1. Main (SE) facade of house, showing the relationship of the farmhouse, 300 year old bur oak and the carriage house.
2. Main (SE) facade and stuccoed NE elevation with 1794 date-stone at gable peak.
3. NE elevation and rear (NW) facade of main house.
4. SW elevation of the main house, showing the kitchen wing (ca. 1700) and the gable end of the 1774 addition.
5. Interior of kitchen, looking towards 1774 section, showing beaded joists.
6. Interior gable end of 1774 section, with fireplace and chair rails.
7. Interior of main hall, looking NW, showing stairs, surrounds and rear plank door.
8. Interior and corner fireplace of front parlor (SE corner) of first floor, 1794 section.
9. Built-in corner cupboard with butterfly shelves and writing board, in first floor parlor (SE corner).
10. 1782 springhouse, southern gable end and western elevation.
11. 1782 springhouse, northern gable and eastern elevation.
12. Looking south from springhouse across Collen Brook and past the 300 year old bur oak to the main house and carriage house.
13. Looking south from the bed of Collen Brook past 300 year old bur oak to rear of main house.
14. Carriage house/garage, front (ESE) facade, showing its orientation to the main house.
15. Carriage house/garage, NNE side and rear of carriage house and main house.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Collen Brook Farm  
NAME:

MULTIPLE  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: PENNSYLVANIA, Delaware

DATE RECEIVED: 11/25/88                      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 12/06/88  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 12/22/88                      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 1/09/89  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 88003048

NOMINATOR: STATE

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N    DATA PROBLEM: N    LANDSCAPE: N    LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N    PDIL: N    PERIOD: N    PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: N    SAMPLE: N    SLR DRAFT: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    12/22/88 DATE

Entered in the  
National Register

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_  
REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_  
DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_  
DATE \_\_\_\_\_

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

---

CLASSIFICATION

count       resource type

---

STATE/FEDERAL AGENCY CERTIFICATION

---

FUNCTION

historic       current

---

DESCRIPTION

architectural classification  
 materials  
 descriptive text

---

SIGNIFICANCE

Period      Areas of Significance--Check and justify below

Specific dates      Builder/Architect  
Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

summary paragraph  
 completeness  
 clarity  
 applicable criteria  
 justification of areas checked  
 relating significance to the resource  
 context  
 relationship of integrity to significance  
 justification of exception  
 other

---

BIBLIOGRAPHY

---

GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

acreage       verbal boundary description  
 UTM's       boundary justification

---

ACCOMPANYING DOCUMENTATION/PRESENTATION

sketch maps       USGS maps       photographs       presentation

---

OTHER COMMENTS

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to

\_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Signed \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION  
BUREAU FOR HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
BOX 1026  
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17108-1026

RECEIVED

NOV 25 1988

NATIONAL  
REGISTER

November 18, 1988

National Register of Historic Places  
U.S. Dept. of the Interior  
Carol Shull, Chief of Registration  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

Re: NR Nomination Forms

Dear Ms. Shull:

The following National Register nomination forms are being submitted for your review and response:

Andrews Bridge Historic District, Lancaster County

Hunter's Mill Complex, Berks County

Collen Brook Farm, Delaware County

Mechanicsville Historic District, Bucks County

Strawsbridge and Clothier, Montgomery County

Henry Smith Farm, Dauphin County

If you have any questions regarding the nominations please call us at (717) 783-8946.

Sincerely,

Dan G. Deibler, Chief  
Division of Preservation Services

DD/dc



Collen Brook Farm

Upper Darby Twp., Delaware Co., PA

View #1



Collen Brook Farm

Upper Darby Twp., Delaware Co., PA

View #2

24



Collen Brook Farm  
Upper Darby Twp., Delaware Co., PA  
View #3



Collen Brook Farm  
Upper Darby Twp., Delaware Co., PA  
View #4



Collen Brook Farm  
Upper Darby Twp., Delaware Co., PA  
View #5



Collen Brook Farm  
Upper Darby Twp., Delaware Co., PA  
View #6



Collen Brook Farm  
Upper Darby Twp, Delaware Co., PA  
View # 7



Collen Brook Farm  
Upper Darby Twp., Delaware Co., PA  
View # 8



Collen Brook Farm  
Upper Darby Twp., Delaware Co., PA  
View #9



Collen Brook Farm  
Upper Darby Twp., Delaware Co., PA  
View #10



Collen Brook Farm  
Upper Darby Twp., Delaware Co., PA  
View #11



Collen Brook Farm  
Upper Darby Twp, Delaware Co., PA  
View #12



13

Collen Brook Farm

Upper Darby Twp., Delaware Co., PA

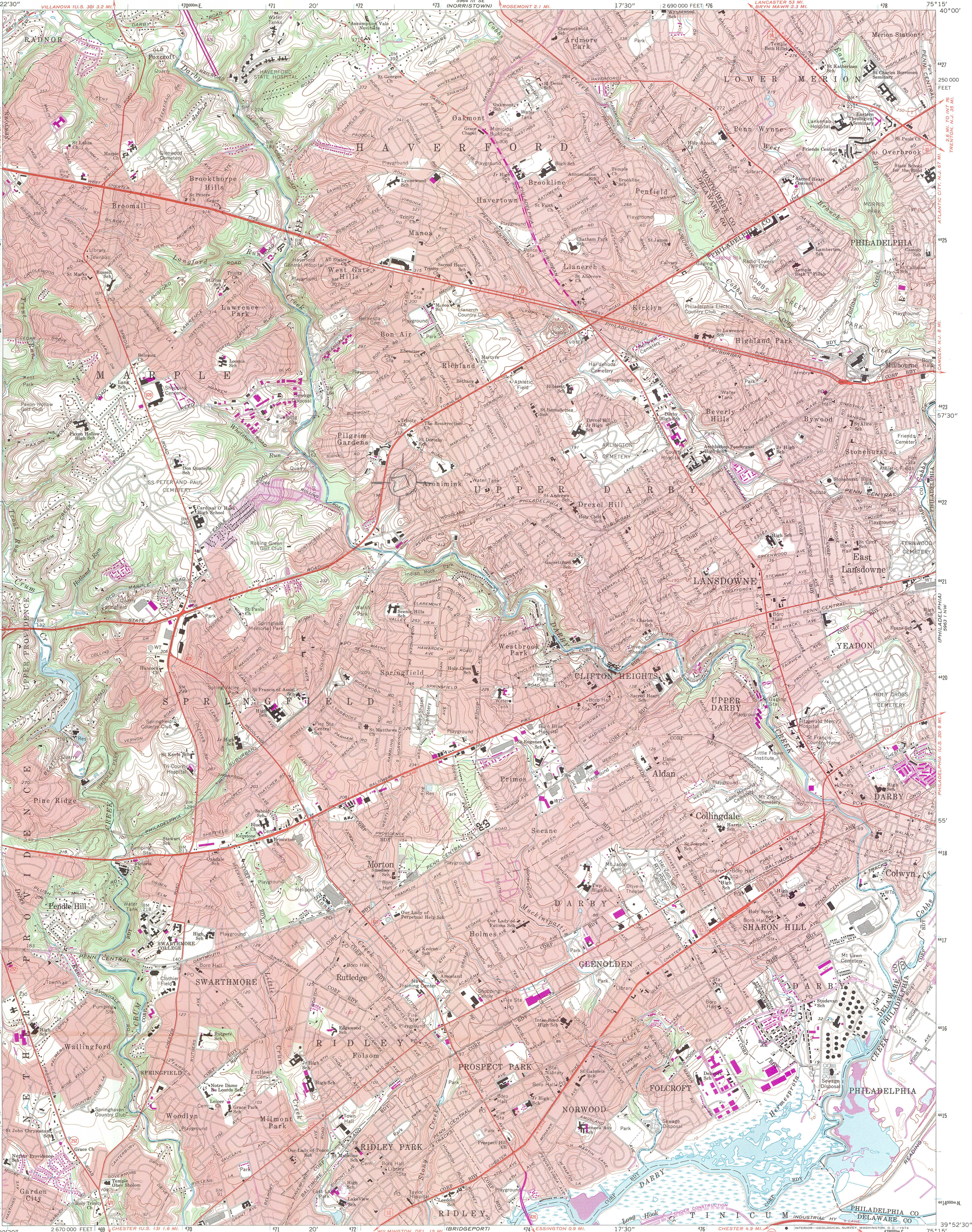
View #13



Collen Brook Farm  
Upper Darby Twp., Delaware Co., PA  
View #14



Collen Brook Farm  
Upper Darby Twp., Delaware Co., PA  
View #15



Collen Brook Farm  
Delaware County  
Zone 18 - Lansdowne Road  
E 472560 N 442210

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS and USC&GS

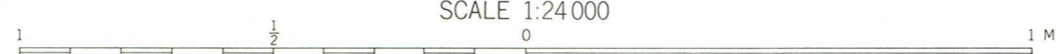
Topography by planetable surveys 1939-1940. Revised from  
aerial photographs taken 1965. Field checked 1967

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

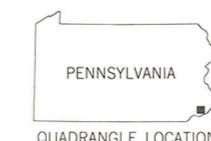
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown

Revisions shown in purple compiled from aerial photographs  
taken 1973. This information not field checked

Purple tint indicates extension of urban areas



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL



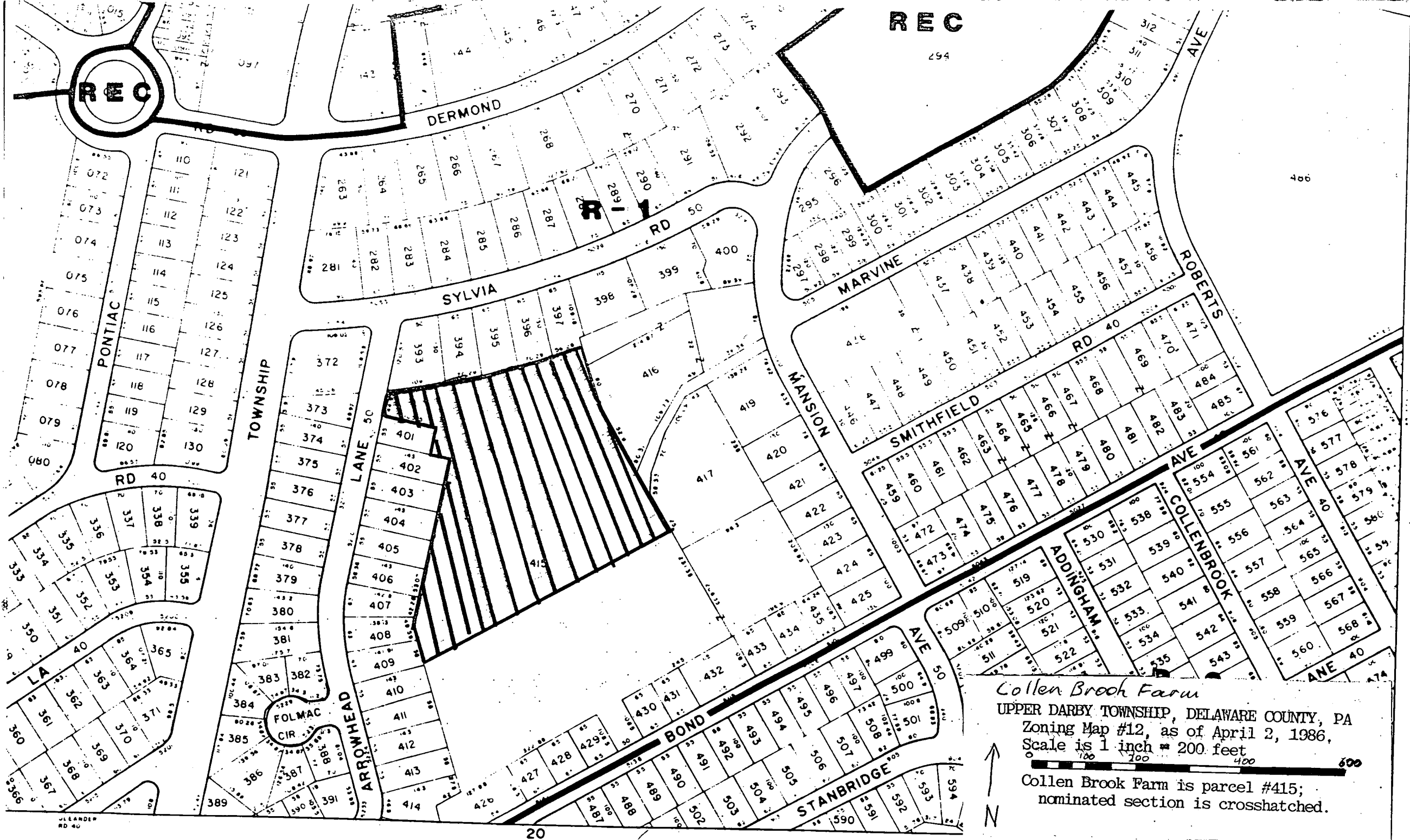
ROAD CLASSIFICATION	
Heavy-duty	Light-duty
Medium-duty	Unimproved dirt
U.S. Route	State Route
Interstate Route	

LANSDOWNE, PA.

N3952.5-W7515/7.5

1967  
PHOTOREVISED 1973  
AMS 5963 IV NE-SERIES V831

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE BY U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



Collen Brook Farm  
 UPPER DARBY TOWNSHIP, DELAWARE COUNTY, PA  
 Zoning Map #12, as of April 2, 1986,  
 Scale is 1 inch = 200 feet  
 Collen Brook Farm is parcel #415;  
 nominated section is crosshatched.

