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INTERAGENCY RESOURCES DIVISION  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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. ~~For instructions, refer 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 an 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 Colley, Abel, Tavern

other names/site number N/A

#### 2. Location

street & number U.S. Rt. 40, approx. 1/2 mile west of Searights Crossroads  not for publication

city or town Menallen Twp.  vicinity

state Pennsylvania code PA county Fayette code 051 zip code 15480

#### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant  nationally  statewide  locally. ( See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

DR. BRENT D. GLASS

Signature of certifying official/Title

Date

PA HISTORICAL & MUSEUM COMMISSION

State of 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 official/Title

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

#### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that the 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:)

Edson H. Beall  
Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

11/27/95

Entered in the  
National Register

Abel Colley tavern  
Name of Property

Fayette Co., PA  
County and State

**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**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>2</u>		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
<u>2</u>		Total

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

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

Hist. Resources of the National Rd. in PA

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic : Hotel

Domestic : Single Dwelling

Domestic: Secondary Structure

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Domestic : Single Dwelling

Vacant / Not in Use

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

Greek Revival

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Stone

walls Brick

roof Metal

other Wood

**Narrative Description**

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

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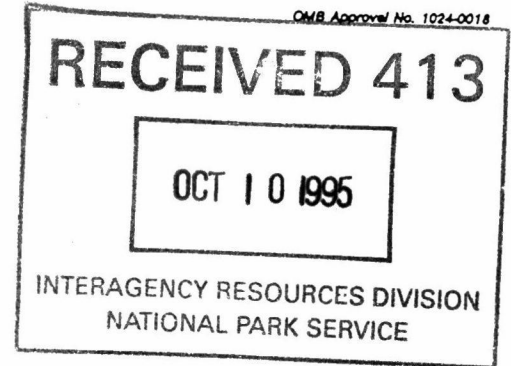
## National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Abel Colley Tavern, Fayette Co., Pa.

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### Description

The c. 1835 **Abel Colley Tavern** is situated fifty feet off the north side of U.S. Route 40, just west of Searights Crossroads. Like all the National Road taverns, not only is it situated near the road, but faces the road as well. This five-bay, double pile, two-and-a-half story, brick house has a two-and-a-half story kitchen ell to the rear. Situated on a rising slope about forty feet from U.S. Rt. 40, the house rests on a coursed sandstone foundation which has been painted white. The house is surrounded on all sides by a tree-shaded lawn. A small brick smoke house stands just northeast of the house. The house is distinguished as a tavern by its relatively large size, linked, double brick chimneys, and double front entrances. Although changes have been made to this property over the years since its construction, it retains sufficient integrity to represent its historic association with the National Road.

The exterior features that indicate that the **Abel Colley Tavern** was influenced by the Greek Revival style include the narrow sidelights and rectangular line of transom lights that surround the front door and the low pitch of the roof. The paired windows above the central entrance appear to be a vernacular version of the Palladian window found on some Greek Revival houses.

The corbeled brick cornice on the front elevation is overshadowed by the low eaves. The front entrances are accessed by large cut stone steps on the front and west sides of the hip roofed front porch. The central entrance leads into the wide stair hall and the door to the west side leads into the former barroom. The open porch is supported with turned wooden posts and a jigsawn balustrade. Wooden lattice work is fitted between the stone porch supports. A double stacked porch extends along the east side of the kitchen ell. The balcony section was enclosed in the 1950s.

There is a bulkhead entrance into the cellar at the south corner of the east gable end. Apparently, this was the only original entrance into the cellar. The owners reported that a large fireplace is located there.

While the east gable end has the typical paired windows on each floor, the west gable end has three windows on each floor. All of the windows have projecting stone sills. A single double-hung sash is located between the double chimney stacks of each gable end. The roof is sheathed with standing seam metal. Modern raking molding has been installed on the gable ends.

The double front doors into the hall have oval and circular panels accented with raised molding. There is a single rectangular transom above the door, and the sidelights are blue and red colored glass. A single recessed panel

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extends below the side lights to the floor. The stair hall provides direct access not only to three of the first floor rooms but to the stairs and rear door to the porch as well. The plastered brick walls which separate the rooms extend from the basement to the attic. The rear door into the hall has four raised panels as does the door on the stair landing leading to the former rear balcony. (This feature is similar to two other Fayette County National Road taverns, the c.1837 **Rush House**, listed on the National Register in 1978, and the c. 1822 **Fayette Springs Hotel**.) The stair hall has high molded baseboard. There is a molded plaster medallion on the ceiling above the foot of the stairs. A light fixture hangs from the center of this medallion. The balustrade consists of a heavy turned newel post, simple turned spindles, and a carved handrail which is curved at the landing. The step bracket at the end of the stringers has a curvilinear design. The heavy moldings of the front door, the heavy turned newel post, and high baseboard in the hall are indicative of a renovation of this area in the late nineteenth century.

The east parlors are similar in size. Each has a fireplace along the east gable wall. The front parlor fireplace has its original surround, but the rear one does not. The front surround is very plain and blocky, typical of vernacular forms of the Greek Revival style. There is a small, narrow cupboard between each fireplace and the wall dividing the rooms. The upper and lower doors into these cupboards have a single panel.

The west front room was the barroom according to tradition. A four-panelled door opens into this room from the front, but the upper panels have been replaced with glass. There is a four-paned, rectangular transom above the door. The present owner noted that depressions in the plaster of the northeast corner of this room indicated that benches had been built into the wall there. The fireplace is situated between the gable end windows of this room. The fireplace surround consists of simple quarter round trim and a mantel with molded cornice beneath. In the northwest corner is a cupboard, possibly the location of the original bar. The upper doors are presently glazed, and the lower doors are sliding blind panels. The cupboard is topped with a low arched recess.(1)

The room to the rear of the barroom has a fireplace along its northern wall instead of at the gable end. The original fireplace surround has been replaced with a twentieth-century rustic brick surround and mantel. This room provides access to the rear kitchen ell. There was also a door that opened onto the porch along the eastern side of the ell. This now opens into a small bathroom.

The kitchen was the northernmost room in the kitchen ell. Previously, there was a fireplace along the northern gable end, but it has been removed. A

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narrow enclosed stair goes up in the northwest corner of the room. This leads to the room above the kitchen. There are also opposing doors, east-to-west, on either side of the kitchen.

There are four doors between the western second floor rooms which can be opened up to create one room. Each of these rooms measure 18 x 18 feet. According to tradition, this is where dances were held.

The one-story, brick smoke house appears contemporary with the main house. The nearly square building has a gable roof.

Despite alterations, such as replacement of the original front porch with a late nineteenth/early twentieth century one, enclosure of the kitchen ell balcony, and replacement of two of the original fireplace surrounds, the building is still able to convey its early nineteenth century significance in association with the National Road. The **Abel Colley Tavern** retains good integrity overall, and the character and feeling of the property remains intact. Likewise, the building remains a good example of the vernacular Greek Revival style.

### End Notes

(1) Interview with Edward Misinay May 4, 1995.

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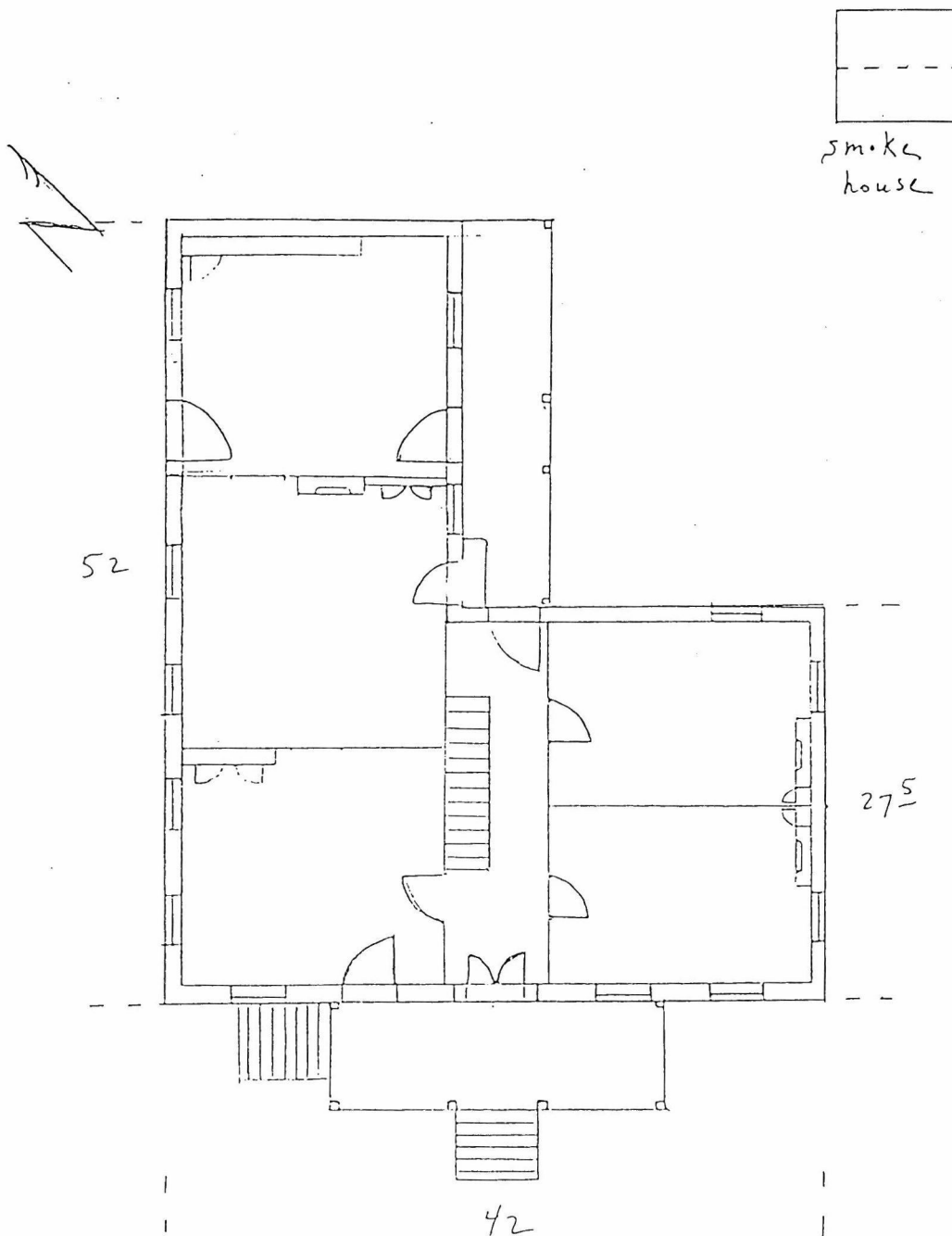
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First Floor Plan  
(Not Drawn to Scale)



Abel Colley Tavern  
Name of Property

Fayette Co., PA  
County and State

**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.

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

Commerce  
Architecture  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

C. 1835 - C. 1852  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Statement of Significance**

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

**Bibliography**

(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

**Primary location of additional data:**

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:  
\_\_\_\_\_

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### Significance

The **Abel Colley Tavern** is significant in the areas of commerce and architecture. This building is part of the property type "Tavern Buildings" as discussed in Historic Resources of the National Road in Pennsylvania Multiple Property Documentation Form. Among the requirements to meet Criterion A the tavern must be documented to be associated with the National Road. To meet Criterion C a tavern must possess architectural integrity which means it should still be identifiable as a tavern through its form and basic floor plan.

Abel Colley was a son of Peter Colley who had an early tavern (Peter Colley Tavern, National Register, 1973) on the National Road nearly two miles northwest of this building in Redstone Township. Reputedly, Abel Colley's tavern-keeping enabled him to accumulate a fortune. Although Searight stated that Colley built this large brick house after he retired from the business in the 1850s, the architectural details of the building indicate that it was probably built before that time. In addition, this building retains typical tavern features including the separate door into the barroom, evidence of former corner benches in the barroom, and second floor rooms which can be joined to form a dance floor. (1)

In 1823 Abel Colley was taxed in Menallen Township as a farmer with forty acres. By 1829 his acreage had increased to 70 acres. This growth continued through 1837, when Colley was first assessed as an innkeeper with the 70 acres as well as for the rent on another 50 acres. Colley continued to purchase additional tracts into the 1840s. He was assessed as an innkeeper through 1852. By 1856 he was assessed as a farmer, and no tavern stands were listed for Menallen Township that year. Apparently, only the **Searight Tavern** operated during certain periods after this time. During the early National Road period innkeepers had considerably higher incomes than farmers, artisans, and craftsmen. This enabled men like Colley to purchase additional lands and build large taverns. Unlike most tavern stands between Uniontown and Brownsville, this tavern was owner operated. Abel's son W. Searight Colley owned the property in the period 1872 through 1894 as a residence. (2)

Menallen Township, located in the Redstone Valley, continued to be known as a rich agricultural area in the late nineteenth century. The National Road cut across the township in a northwesterly direction, connecting Uniontown with Brownsville, creating a commercial outlet for the township. By 1823 there were seven taverns in the township. Six taverns continued to operate up to about 1850. William Searight and Abel Colley had two of the best known taverns in the area. The large, stone Searight tavern, which burned in 1940,

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was located less than a half mile east of the **Abel Colley Tavern**. (3)

The **Abel Colley Tavern** is one of about thirty taverns/hotels which were determined eligible as part of the Multiple Property Resources of the National Road. It is one of two documented to survive in Menallen Township. The nearby **Frost Tavern** was the other one named in Grantz's 1987 study. (Grantz concluded that less than a third of the taverns of the early National Road era have survived.) Like most of the surviving National Road taverns, this one is of masonry construction. In addition to its large size, the **Colley Tavern** retains many other features that make it identifiable as a tavern including the kitchen ell with a double stacked porch and the two front doors, one of which opens into the barroom area. The building's floor plan remains intact, and it retains more of its interior woodwork than most. (4)

The **Abel Colley Tavern** is significant not only for its association with the early nineteenth century commercial development of the National Road but its early nineteenth century vernacular Greek Revival style architecture as well.

End Notes

(1) Thomas B. Searight, The Old Pike: A History of the National Road, with Incidents, Accidents, and Anecdotes Thereon (Berryville, VA: The Prince Maccus Publishers, 1983), p. 250; Atlas of the County of Fayette and State of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins & Co., 1872), p. 39.

(2) Ronald L. Michael and Ronald Carlisle, "The Peter Colley Tavern, 1801-1854," Pennsylvania Folklife, Autumn 1973, p. 34; Ronald L. Michael, "The Searight Tavern on the National Road: An Archaeological Study," Pennsylvania Folklife, Autumn 1971, p. 28; Menallen Township, Fayette County, Tax Assessments, 1823-1856.

(3) Franklin Ellis, ed., History of Fayette County, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: L.H. Everts & Co., 1882), p. 653; Ronald L. Michael, "The Searight Tavern on the National Road: An Archaeological Study," Pennsylvania Folklife, Autumn 1971, p. 30.

(4) Denise L. Grantz. "National Road: Historic Resource Survey, Final Report and Analysis Submitted to the Bureau for Historic Preservation (unpublished report dated June 30, 1987), pp. 25, 40.

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## Bibliography

Atlas of the County of Fayette and State of Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: G.M. Hopkins & Co., 1872)

Robert Bruce, The National Road (Berryville, Va: The Prince Maccus Publishers, 1983).

Franklin Ellis, ed., History of Fayette County, Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: L.H. Everts & Co., 1882).

Denise L. Grantz. "National Road: Historic Resource Survey, Final Report and Analysis Submitted to the Bureau for Historic Preservation (unpublished report dated June 30, 1987).

Thomas B. Searight, The Old Pike: A History of the National Road, with Incidents, Accidents, and Anecdotes Thereon (Berryville, VA: The Prince Maccus Publishers, 1983).

Menallen Township, Fayette County, Assessment Records, 1823-1857.

Fayette County Deed Books.

Fayette County Will Books.



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### Boundary Description

Beginning at a point on the northern edge of U.S. Route 40 approximately thirty feet beyond the western wall of the **Abel Colley Tavern** and proceeding northeast from this point along this line to a point forty-nine feet behind the tavern, then proceeding from this point in southeasterly direction to a point twenty feet beyond the eastern edge of the tavern, then proceeding in a southwesterly direction approximately 151 feet to a point on the northern edge of U.S. Route 40, then proceeding in a northwesterly direction approximately 92 feet to the point of beginning.

### Boundary Justification

The boundary only includes the land immediately surrounding the **Abel Colley Tavern** and its smoke house in order to exclude open land surrounding the property.

### Abel Colley Tavern Photo List

All of the following photographs of the **Abel Colley Tavern**, located in Menallen Township, Fayette County, Pennsylvania, were taken by Jerry Clouse, May 1995. All of the negatives are located in the offices of the Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission.

1. Looking northeast at front elevation of **Colley Tavern**.
2. Looking north at front and east elevations of the **Colley Tavern**.
3. Looking west at kitchen ell of the **Colley Tavern**.
4. Looking southeast at the west elevation of the **Colley Tavern**.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY Colley, Abel, Tavern  
NAME:

MULTIPLE National Road in Pennsylvania MPS  
NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: PENNSYLVANIA, Fayette

DATE RECEIVED: 10/17/95                      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 10/31/95  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 11/16/95                      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 12/01/95  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 95001352

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 NATIONAL: N

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT       RETURN       REJECT      11-27-95 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS: *Entered in the  
National Register*

RECOM./CRITERIA \_\_\_\_\_

REVIEWER \_\_\_\_\_ DISCIPLINE \_\_\_\_\_

TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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



1. Abel Colley Tavern, Fayette Co., Pa.



2. Abel Colley Tavern, Fayette Co., Pa.



3. Abel Colley Tavern, Fayette Co., Pa.



4. Abel Colley Tavern, Fayette Co., Pa,

Please refer to the map in the  
Multiple Property Cover Sheet  
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64500534