



COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA  
PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION  
P.O. BOX 1026, HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17108-1026

81000579  
delisted

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

July 14, 1998

Carol Shull, Chief of Registration  
National Register of Historic Places  
U.S. Department of Interior  
National Park Service  
1849 C Street, NW  
Suite NC 400  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Re: Lehigh County Prison, Lehigh County, Pennsylvania

Dear Ms. Shull:

It has been brought to my attention that the Lehigh County Prison remains listed in the National Register despite having been demolished a few years ago and replaced with a new prison.

I am therefore requesting removal of the Lehigh County Prison from listing in the National Register.

If you have questions please contact Greg Ramsey in the Bureau for Historic Preservation at 717-783-9919.

Sincerely,

BRENT D. GLASS

cc: Executive Director, Lehigh County Historical Society, P. O. Box 1548, Allentown, PA 18105-1548

Enclosures  
DGD/gr



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: REMOVAL

PROPERTY NAME: Lehigh County Prison

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: PENNSYLVANIA, Lehigh

DATE RECEIVED: 7/28/98 DATE OF PENDING LIST:  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: DATE OF 45TH DAY: 9/11/98  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 81000549

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 \_\_\_\_\_ DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*Removed from the National Register*

RECOM./CRITERIA Remove  
REVIEWER Beall DISCIPLINE Historian  
TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_ DATE 8-24-98

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

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

# National Register of Historic Places Inventory—Nomination Form

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received AUG 11 1981

date entered SEP 11 1981

## 1. Name

historic Lehigh County Prison

and/or common

## 2. Location

street & number Fourth and Linden Streets \_\_\_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Allentown \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ congressional district 15

state Pennsylvania code 42 county Lehigh code 077

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property

name County of Lehigh

street & number Courthouse, Fifth and Hamilton Streets

city, town Allentown \_\_\_\_\_ vicinity of \_\_\_\_\_ state Pennsylvania 18101

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Lehigh County Courthouse

street & number Fifth and Hamilton Streets

city, town Allentown \_\_\_\_\_ state Pennsylvania

## 6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Pennsylvania Inventory of  
title Historic Places

has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date 9/26/80 \_\_\_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_\_\_ county \_\_\_\_\_ local

depository for survey records Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

city, town Harrisburg \_\_\_\_\_ state Pennsylvania

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date _____
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The architectural significance of the Lehigh County Prison is to be found largely in the central office building which, when first constructed, contained offices and the warden's apartment. The basic architectural style is Norman Gothic, as modified in the Plantaganet era, and used in the construction of the castle gatehouse which in that time had become the most important defensive structure of a castle. The design of this section of the Lehigh County Prison shows a recessed portal flanked by two guardian towers. Originally, rising above the keep, was a guard tower one hundred feet high. Because of maintenance problems this was removed about 1940.

The central office building is about twenty-four feet square and two stories high. The front and side walls are constructed of dark red sandstone in polished ashlar. The watch tower had also been constructed of red sandstone in polished ashlar. It was about five feet square and was topped by a battlement with three embrasures on each side. Beneath the battlement was a dentillated cornice. On each side was placed a cruciform loop hole. A Greek cross was used for decoration at the base of the tower.

Similar battlements, embrasures and cornices decorated both guardian towers. Quoins were also employed for this purpose at each front corner of both towers. On the first floor level are found two adjoining windows, 2/2, with semi-elliptical lintels. On the second floor level are single windows, 4/4, also with semi-elliptical lintels. On the first level

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Lehigh County Prison, Lehigh County

For HCERS use only

received

AUG 11 1981

date entered

SEP 11 1981

Continuation sheet

Item number

7

Page

2

of the recessed portal is a double wooden door studded with iron bolts. On the second level are two adjoining windows and above these are found three smaller windows, probably representing openings for the discharge of weapons by defending bowmen. Extending about twelve feet on either side of the central office building is the front guard wall. This is also constructed of red sandstone and is about thirty feet high and thirty inches thick. At each end of the wall is a guard tower. The towers are surmounted by parapets broken by embrasures. A dentillated cornice is found on both walls and towers. Three narrow recesses are found in each wall surmounted by semi-elliptical lintels. Greek crosses are located beneath the cornice of each guard tower on both street sides. In recent years the original structure was modified with the removal of the watch tower and the repair of the front walls with a red concrete sheathing. A beautiful lawn of three terraces has been replaced also by a macadamized parking lot.

The original walls of the prison complex are still in place. The rear wall is forty-eight feet wide and both side walls are 178 feet long. They are about thirty feet high, about thirty inches thick and are constructed of limestone taken from a Salisbury Township quarry. The pattern is rock-faced plain ashlar. In the northwest corner of the rear wall is a double gate about twenty-six feet high and eight feet wide. As with all wood fixtures in the original prison it is constructed of oak studded with iron bolts.

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

Lehigh County Prison, Lehigh County

For HCRS use only

received

AUG 11 1981

date entered

SEP 11 1981

Continuation sheet

Item number

7

Page 3

The first confinement area is attached to the central office building. As true of the walls, it was built of Lehigh County limestone in rock-faced plain ashlar. It was about thirty-six feet high with a clerestory section to provide ventilation and natural light. Within the buildings were constructed two tiers of twenty cells each. Space was provided also for seven large workrooms. The basement contained two rooms of cells which were used, probably, for special discipline cases.

The second confinement area, erected in 1908-1909, is built of cement block. It is about fifty feet high and contains three tiers each with steel cells. In the basement were located several large workrooms, including the prison laundry and the original boiler room. As part of this addition a two-story "L" was constructed to accommodate about fifteen female prisoners. Within the past four years a dormitory unit, built of cinder block, has been erected in the north yard. As it stands at present, the Lehigh County Prison is a collection of five structures erected at different times, according to several different patterns of construction. They are linked to form a single operating unit. However, the dominant motif is that of the two enclosed buildings erected in 1867-1870. The later additions have not appreciably modified the original structures.

The architect of the original building was Gustavus A. Aschbach, 1826-1875. Born in Germany, Aschbach fled his homeland in 1850 after the failure of the revolution which had begun in 1848. He arrived in Allentown

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

Lehigh County Prison, Lehigh County

Continuation sheet

Item number

7

Page 4

For HCERS use only	
received	AUG 11 1981
date entered	SEP 11 1981

in 1854. He had received university training in engineering and architecture. He served as Allentown's City engineer for many years. He designed several public buildings in the city as well as some private homes. His romantic vision was responsible for the design of the central building, the one distinguished structure in the complex known as the Lehigh County Prison.

# 8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

**Specific dates** 1869, 1909      **Builder/Architect** G.A. Aschbach, Architect  
 Stephen Dornblazer, Builder  
 James Focht, Builder

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

Two buildings represent the effort to maintain law and order and dispense justice to the people of Pennsylvania—the county court house and the county prison. Until recent years these two structures, together with the county home for the indigent aging, were physical expressions of the existence and functions of county government. Of all buildings in a county, none was more forbidding in appearance than the county prison, but, to the vast majority of the people, it was regarded as essential to their protection from lawbreakers. Therefore, despite controversy about its effectiveness, the county prison, as a structure, represents an important societal function. Also, because of its importance, the county prison was one of the first public buildings to be erected by a county government, and therefore, today, frequently it is one of the oldest public buildings in a county. This is true of the Lehigh County Prison. It is the second oldest surviving public building in the county.

The present building is the second prison to be erected by Lehigh County. The first was built between 1813 and 1817 at the southeast corner of Fifth and Linden Streets in Allentown, the seat of county government in Lehigh County. It antedated the construction of the county court house by several years.

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Mathews, Alfred & Hungerford, Austin N. History of the Counties of Lehigh and Carbon. Philadelphia: Everts & Richards, 1884.

Pappas, Constantine. "A Short Biography of Lehigh County Prison." Typewritten.

Roberts, et.al. Anniversary History of Lehigh County. Allentown: Lehigh Valley Publishing Co. 1914,

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 2.1

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle name Allentown East, Pa.

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UMT References

UTM NOT VERIFIED

A 

18	460500	4494780
Zone	Easting	Northing

B 

Zone	Easting	Northing	

C 

Zone	Easting	Northing	

D 

Zone	Easting	Northing	

E 

Zone	Easting	Northing	

F 

Zone	Easting	Northing	

G 

Zone	Easting	Northing	

H 

Zone	Easting	Northing	

Verbal boundary description and justification Bounded by Fourth Street on the east; Linden Street on the north; Penn Street on the west and Court Street to south.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state code county code

state code county code

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Dr. Mahlon H. Hellerich, Director, Office of Archives & Museums

organization Lehigh County date Sept. 1980

street & number 5th & Hamilton Sts. telephone 215-820-3282

city or town Allentown state Pennsylvania 18101

# 12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

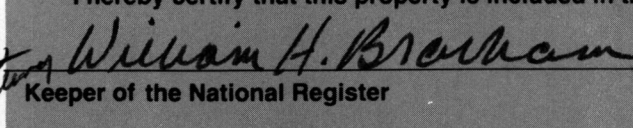
The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national  state  local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature 

ED WEINTRAUB, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer  
title Director, Bureau for Historic Preservation date 9/15/81

For HCRS use only  
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register  
  
Keeper of the National Register date 9.11.81  
Attest: \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_  
Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

Lehigh County Prison

Continuation sheet

Item number 8

Page 2

For HCRS use only

received

AUG 11 1981

date entered

SEP 11 1981

As the Civil War was coming to a close the county commissioners decided to renovate and enlarge the court house and to erect a new prison. The old prison was found to be too small and too insecurely constructed to accommodate the number of prisoners generally confined therein. Consequently, in 1866 the county commissioners purchased a new site, extending along Linden Street from Fourth to Penn Streets, and along Fourth Street, from Linden to Court Streets. The commissioners engaged a local architect, G.A. Aschbach, to design the new structure and work was begun in 1867. The stone, except that used in the construction of the front, came from a Salisbury Township quarry. Prisoners were transferred to the new structure in 1869. Final work was completed in 1870.

In 1908 work was begun on an addition which was constructed of cement block containing steel cells. A separate section was built to accommodate female prisoners. All work on the addition was completed by July 1, 1909. This is essentially the prison as it stands today.

A small dormitory was built in 1976 within the north wall to house prisoners admitted to the work release program.

The historical significance of a county prison has several dimensions in addition to the record of the construction of physical facilities. One is the record of the development of a more humane and liberal policy in the treatment of prisoners in the gradual acceptance of the principle that rehabilitation should accompany, if not replace, punishment as the

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Lehigh County Prison, Lehigh County

Continuation sheet

Item number

8

Page

3

For HCRS use only

received

AUG 11 1981

date entered

SEP 11 1981

goal of incarceration. This gradual change can be seen in policies and procedures in force at various stages in the history of the Lehigh County Prison. As early as 1873 the manufacture of carpeting with hand looms was introduced to provide active work for the prisoners and income for the county. In the 1890s the manufacture of cane for chairs was begun. Therefore, therapy became an integral part of prison life. An effort was made to encourage learning with the provision of a small library by a citizen group in 1880.

During the Progressive Era additional reforms were made in the Lehigh County Prison. Prisoners were vaccinated for small pox, separate but equal facilities were established for women, juveniles were separated from the older prison inmates and a new addition was constructed to relieve overcrowding. In the 1920s prisoners were supplied with a dentifrice and toothbrush, yard exercise was allowed, and the women's quarters were enlarged. In 1924 outside work was allowed for the first time. In the 1930s a barber shop was opened and visitation opportunities were increased.

More recently, a professional warden was appointed, the work release program was enlarged and a separate dormitory built to house program participants. Recreational programs have been introduced as interior work therapy programs were abandoned. A Treatment Department and Community Services Department have been organized, and the latter has arranged for fourteen community organizations, staffed by volunteers, to offer self-

United States Department of the Interior  
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Lehigh County Prison, Lehigh County

Continuation sheet

Item number

8

Page

4

For HCERS use only

received

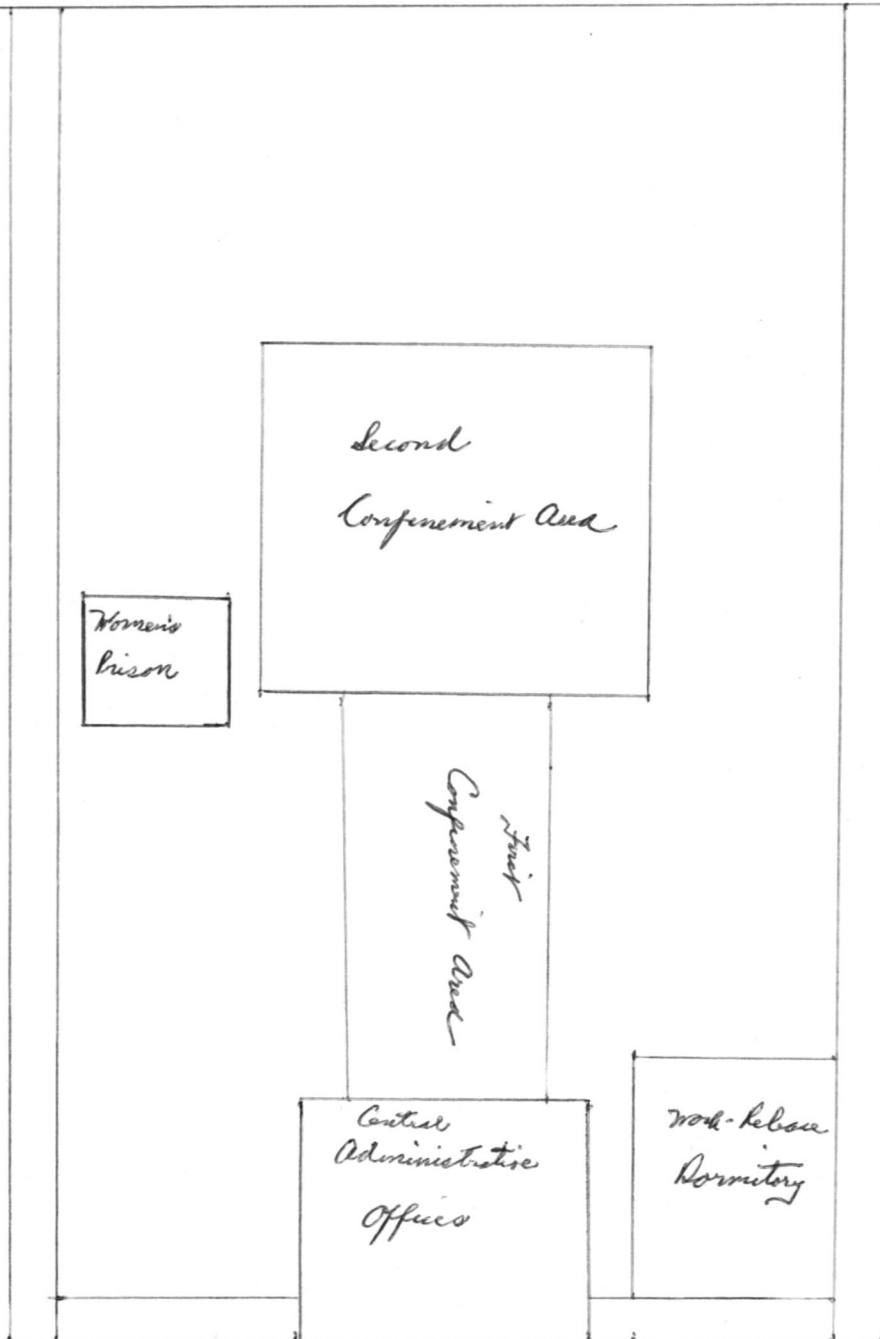
AUG 11 1981

date entered

SEP 11 1981

help programs. All this reinforces the proposition that the county prison is one of the most important social service institution in the community.

Penn Street



Court Street

Arms Street

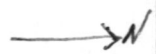
1001 11-12

Fourth Street

Lehigh County Prison Complex - Site Plan

(not according to scale)

Lehigh County Prison  
Lehigh County  
Site Plan



12/15/80

24.7



SEP 11 1981

Substantive Review

DUE after 9/9/81 dnr-3/25/81

Name Lehigh County Prison

State, County PA, Lehigh

Fed Nom or Request-Agency \_\_\_\_\_

Working Number 8.11.81.300

Federal Register Date 2.2.82

- Nomination
- Determination of Eligibility
- On Nomination Form

- Bldg(s)
- Site
- Object
- Structure
- District

- Within:
- Multiple Resource Area
  - Thematic Group

Maps 1/1  
Photos 1/2

81000549

- Nomination prepared by:
- State Staff
  - Local
  - Other

- Action:
- ACCEPT 9/11/81
  - RETURN \_\_\_\_\_
  - REJECT \_\_\_\_\_

- Check if Appropriate:
- State Request for Review
  - Keeper's Decision to Review
  - 2nd Return

I. Evaluation of Resource (cont. on back if necessary)

Eligible A+C

Removed from the National Register

6/24/98

II. Evaluation of Nomination

	Good			Comments
	Adequate	Poor		
1. Descriptive Statement Short Format <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	+			
2. Significance Statement Short Format <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No	+			
3. Concepts/Integrity	+			
4. Concepts/Criteria	+			
5. Concepts/Boundaries	+			
6. Contextual Evaluation	+			

General Comments (cont. on back if necessary):

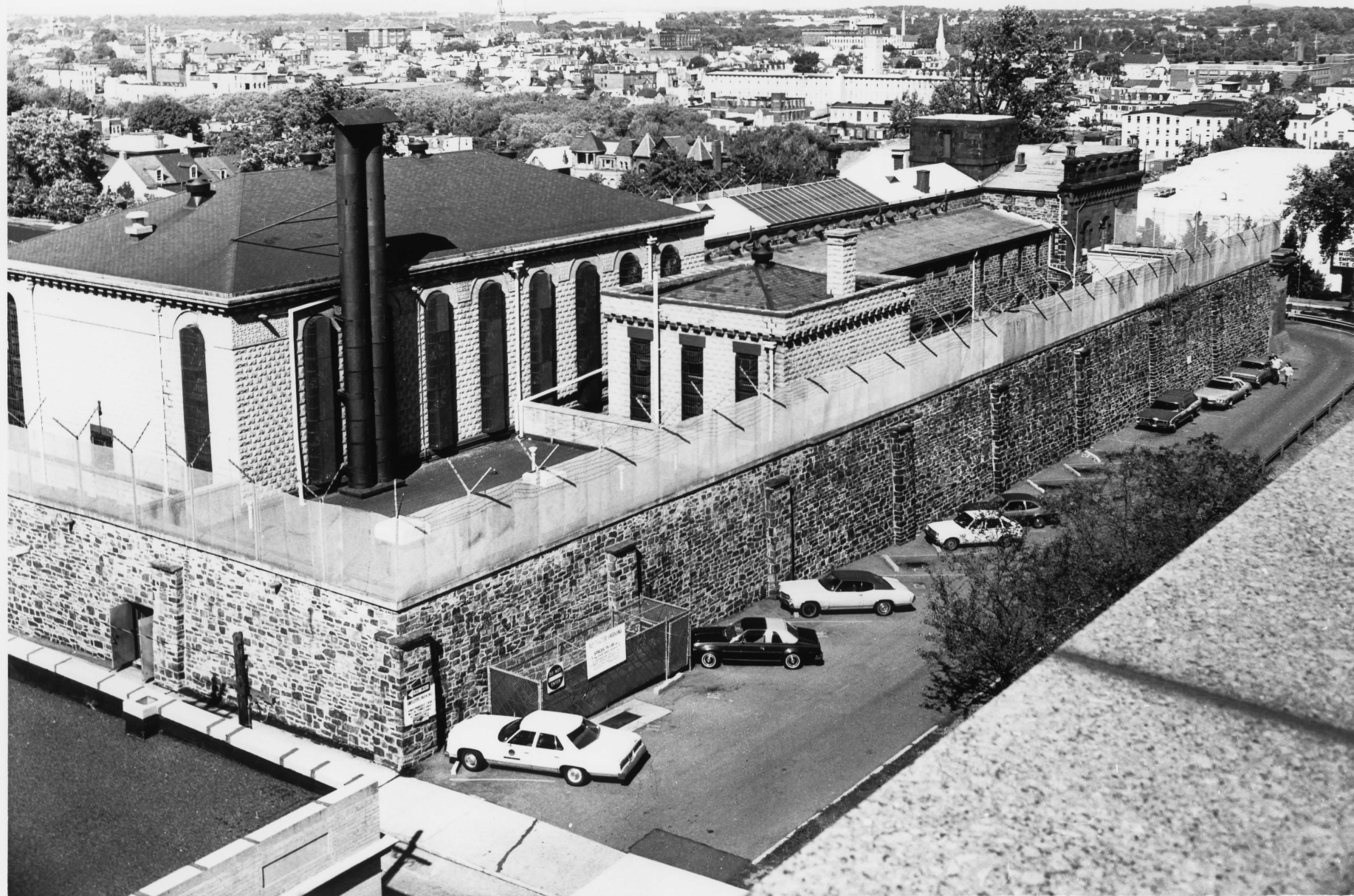
Reviewer/Date W.H. Brubaker 9.11.81

See Attached \_\_\_\_\_

LEHIGH COUNTY PRISON, ALLENTOWN, PA.









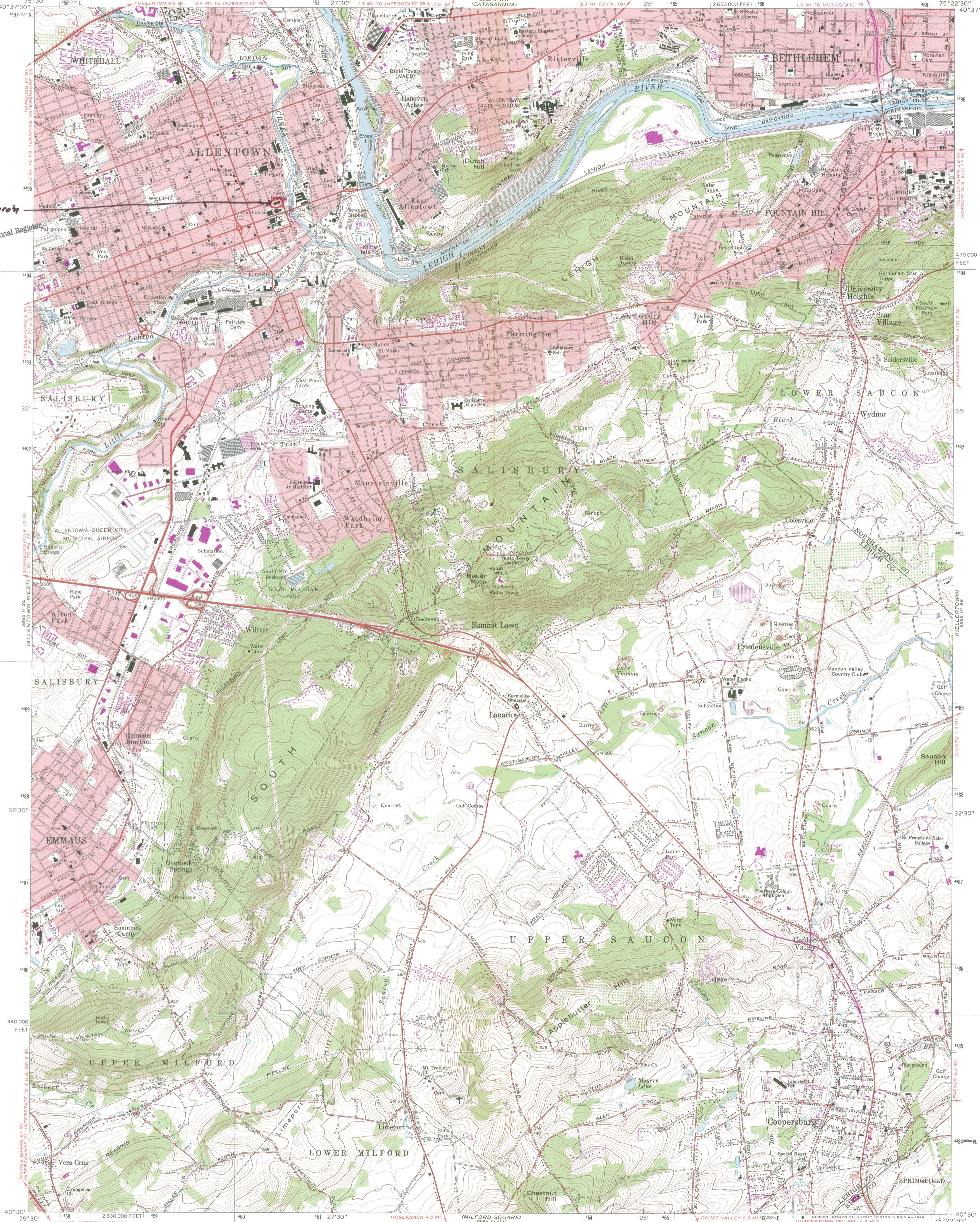




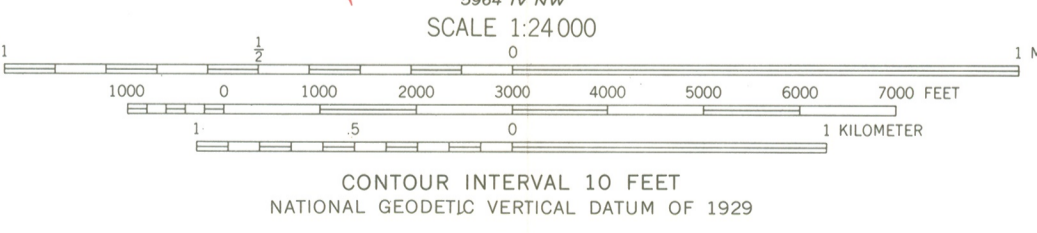


Lehigh County Prison  
Lehigh County  
Zone 18 7450300 N4494780

Lehigh County Prison  
Removed from the National Register



Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey  
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and USCE  
Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial  
photographs taken 1962. Field checked 1964  
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  
Fine red dashed lines indicate selected fence and field lines where  
generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked  
Red tint indicates areas in which only landmark buildings are shown



**H. M. PAUL & SON, INC.**  
OFFICE FURNITURE & STATIONERY  
529 West Broad St., Bethlehem, Pa.  
ROAD CLASSIFICATION  
Heavy-duty ——— Light-duty ———  
Medium-duty ——— Unimproved dirt ———  
Interstate Route ——— U.S. Route ———  
State Route ———



ALLENTOWN EAST, PA.  
SW/4 ALLENTOWN 15' QUADRANGLE  
N4030—W7522.5/7.5  
1964  
PHOTOREVISED 1972  
AMS 9965 III SW—SERIES V831

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
FOR SALE, BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST

SEP 11 1981

10

ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE PENNSYLVANIA

Date Entered SEP 11 1981

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
Haines Mill	Allentown Lehigh County
Lock Ridge Furnace Complex	Alburtis Lehigh County
Lehigh County Prison <i>Removed from the National Register</i>	Allentown Lehigh County
Old Lehigh County Courthouse	Allentown Lehigh County
Farmer's High School (Pennsylvania State College)	State College Centre County
Municipal Building and Central Fire Station	Scranton Lackawanna County
Priestley, Dr. Joseph, House (Cross Keys Inn)	Northumberland Northumberland County

Also Notified

Honorable Arlen Specter

Honorable H. John Heinz, III  
Honorable Don Ritter  
Honorable William F. Clinger, Jr.  
Honorable Joseph M. McDade  
Honorable Allen E. Ertel  
Mid-Atlantic Region, NPS

State Historic Preservation Officer  
Mr. Larry Tise  
Executive Director  
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum  
Commission  
P.O. Box 1026  
Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17120

For further information, please call the National Register at (202) 943-6401.

272-3504

Eady/bjr/9/17/81

NR

Lehigh County Prison  
(Resource Name)

81000549  
(Reference Number[s])

9 1 8 198  
(Date form completed)

Lehigh  
(County)

PA  
(State)

E Beall  
(Completed by)

STATUS:

1. MISSING \_\_\_\_\_ 2. REMOVED/  DEMOLISHED 3. NHL \_\_\_\_\_ 4. TR \_\_\_\_\_ 5. MRA \_\_\_\_\_ 6. OVER-SIZED \_\_\_\_\_ 7. NPS - \_\_\_\_\_ UNDOCUMENTED 8. DOE - \_\_\_\_\_ OWNER OBJECTION 9. RESTRICTED \_\_\_\_\_

EXPLANATION:

1. Missing Status: Entire Folder ( ) ; Nomination ( ) ; Map(s) ( ) ; Photos ( )  
Available on: Microfiche ( ) ; Optical Disk ( )

2. Demolished  
(Cause for removal)

8 1 24 198  
(Date Removed)

3. \_\_\_\_\_  
(NHL Name, if different than NRHP Name)

1 1  
(Date Designated)

4. \_\_\_\_\_  
(If multi-state/county TR, state/county where filed and location)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(TR or MRA Name)

5. \_\_\_\_\_  
(If multi-state/county MRA, state/county where filed and location)

6. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Location of oversize file)

7. \_\_\_\_\_  
(Current source of partial documentation)

1 1  
(Target Date)

COMMENTS: \_\_\_\_\_  
(Where found, or source of replacement)

1 1  
(Date Found/Replaced)