

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: PENNSYLVANIA	
COUNTY: CAMBRIA	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

NAME
COMMON:
JOHNSTOWN INCLINED RAILWAY

AND OR HISTORIC:
INCLINED PLANE

LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
JOHNS STREET (JOHNSTOWN) AND EDGEHILL DRIVE (WESTMONT)

CITY OR TOWN:
JOHNSTOWN

STATE: PENNSYLVANIA	CODE: 42	COUNTY: CAMBRIA	CODE: 021
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I. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
AGENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <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"/> Commons <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) IN OPERATION AS A TOURIST ATTRACTION ADMINISTERED BY THE CAMBRIA COUNTY TOURIST COUNCIL.

II. OWNER OF PROPERTY
OWNER'S NAME:
WESTMONT BOROUGH (LEASED TO THE CAMBRIA COUNTY TOURIST COUNCIL)

STREET AND NUMBER:
WESTMONT BOROUGH

CITY OR TOWN:
JOHNSTOWN

STATE: PENNSYLVANIA	CODE: 42
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III. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
CAMBRIA COUNTY COURTHOUSE

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:
DUNSBURG

IV. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMM. - HISTORIC BUILDINGS AND SITES IN PENNA.

DATE OF SURVEY: 1965
 Federal
 State
 County
 Local

AGENCY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION

STREET AND NUMBER:
DUNSBURG

STATE: PENNSYLVANIA	CODE: 42
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INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: PENNSYLVANIA	COUNTY: CAMBRIA
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

(Check One)					
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
(Check One)			(Check One)		
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered SLIGHTLY			<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		
			<input type="checkbox"/> Moved		
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

THE INCLINED PLANE RAILWAY WAS BUILT AS A "LIFESAVER" AFTER THE JOHNSTOWN FLOOD OF MAY 31, 1889. IT WAS CONSTRUCTED WITH A 986.5 FOOT RUNWAY AT 71 PER CENT GRADE. THE WHEELS, RAILS AND OTHER PARTS WERE ADAPTED FROM STANDARD RAILROAD EQUIPMENT BY THE CAMBRIA IRON COMPANY. THE LOWER ENTRANCE TO THE RAILWAY, CROSSING STONYCREEK, CONSISTED OF A HEAVY IRON BRIDGE CONSTRUCTED WITH THREE-FOOT-THICK IRON GIRDERS AND SUPPORTED BY IMMENSE STONE ABUTMENTS. THE RAILWAY ITSELF WAS MADE UP OF TWO CABLE DRIVEN CARS, EACH OF WHICH WEIGHED 42 TONS WITH A 15-TON CAPACITY PER CAR. THE CABLE WAS 2 INCHES IN DIAMETER, 1130 FEET IN LENGTH, AND CONSISTED OF ONE PULLING CABLE AND ONE SAFETY CABLE CAPABLE OF SUPPORTING OVER 165 TONS.

THE LARGEST OBJECT IN THE RAILWAY'S ENGINE ROOM WAS A STEAM DRIVEN, CAST IRON DRUM, 50 FEET IN CIRCUMFERENCE AND 16 FEET IN DIAMETER, AROUND WHICH THE CABLE FROM THE CARS WAS WOUND. THERE WERE TWO, FOOT CONTROLLED AIR BRAKES LOCATED ON THE LEFT SIDE OF THE DRUM WHILE AN EMERGENCY "BULL BRAKE" WAS SITUATED ON THE RIGHT SIDE.

THE UNIQUE DESIGN OF THE CARS PROVIDED A LEVEL RIDE FOR HORSES AND WAGONS (AND LATER, CARS AND TRUCKS) AND PEDESTRIANS, AND WAS COPIED FROM THE TEN PLANES WHICH HAULED CARGO ACROSS THE ALLEGHENY MOUNTAINS ON THE PORTAGE RAILROAD.

THE ONLY MAJOR CHANGE MADE SINCE ITS CONSTRUCTION HAS BEEN REPLACEMENT OF THE ORIGINAL STEAM ENGINE WITH A 400 HORSEPOWER ELECTRIC MOTOR IN 1962, WHEN THE ENTIRE RAILWAY WAS RESTORED AND REOPENED BY THE CAMBRIA COUNTY TOURIST COUNCIL.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian 16th Century 18th Century 20th Century
 15th Century 17th Century 19th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1890 - 1891

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

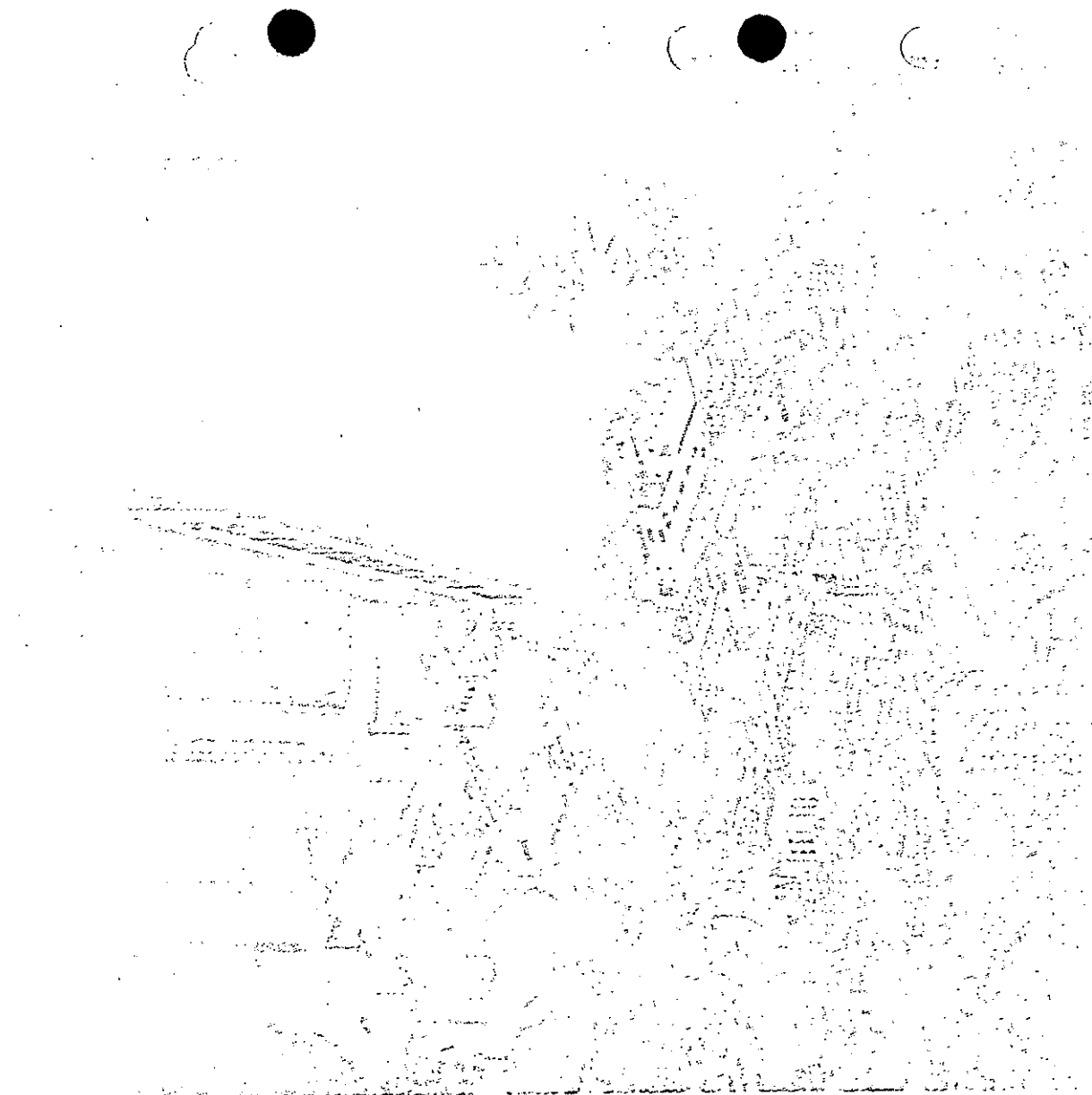
CONSTRUCTION OF THE RAILWAY WAS UNDERTAKEN BY THE CAMBRIA IRON COMPANY, A PREDECESSOR OF BETHLEHEM STEEL COMPANY, IN 1890 AND OPENED FOR BUSINESS ON JUNE 1, 1891. IT COST THE COMPANY \$133,296 AND WAS INTENDED TO PROVIDE EASY TRANSPORTATION UP YODER HILL FOR THE RESIDENTS OF THE IRON COMPANY'S NEW REALITY DEVELOPMENT - WESTMONT. FOR OVER 25 YEARS IT SERVED AS A SAFE AND SURE LINK TO THE COMMUNITY SITUATED ON THE RIM OF THE HILL OVERLOOKING JOHNSTOWN. BECAUSE OF ITS CONVENIENCE AND ACCESS TO THE HEART OF THE BUSINESS DISTRICT, IT WAS DIRECTLY RESPONSIBLE FOR WESTMONT BECOMING ONE OF THE NATION'S FIRST RESIDENTIAL SUBURBS.

IN 1935 BETHLEHEM STEEL SOLD THE RAILWAY TO WESTMONT BOROUGH FOR \$1. THE RAILWAY MORE THAN LIVED UP TO ITS ORIGINAL LIFESAVING PURPOSE ON MARCH 17, 1936 WHEN IT CARRIED OVER 4,000 MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN TO SAFETY FROM THE FLOOD WATERS OF THE CONEMAUGH AND STONYCREEK VALLEYS.

AS BETTER ROADS WERE BUILT UP THE HILL FOLLOWING WW II, USE OF THE RAILWAY DECLINED, AND IT WAS CLOSED BY WESTMONT ON JANUARY 31, 1962. IT WAS REOPENED, HOWEVER, ON JULY 1, 1962 AFTER AN EXTENSIVE RESTORATION PROJECT UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE CAMBRIA COUNTY TOURIST COUNCIL AND THE JOHNSTOWN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE.

IN OVER 80 YEARS OF OPERATION, THE INCLINED PLANE RAILWAY HAS CARRIED OVER 40 MILLION PASSENGERS AND COUNTLESS VEHICLES WITH THE LOSS OF ONLY ONE LIFE DUE TO AN ACCIDENT

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



SIGNIFICANCE CONT.

INVOLVING A TRUCK ON ONE OF THE RAILWAY CARS AND NOT BECAUSE OF ANY MALFUNCTIONING OF EQUIPMENT. IT IS ONE OF THE LONGEST AND STEEPEST HOISTS IN THE WORLD AND ONE OF THE FEW TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS OF ITS KIND STILL IN EXISTENCE. THE RAILWAY FURTHER ATTESTS TO THE 19TH CENTURY ENGINEERING INGENUITY OF THE WELSH AND GERMAN IMMIGRANTS IN PROMOTING THE INDUSTRIAL AND COMMERCIAL GROWTH OF WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"INCLINED PLANE, JOHNSTOWN, PA." PAMPHLET PREPARED BY THE CAMBRIA COUNTY TOURIST COUNCIL, COURTHOUSE, EBENSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA.
 "GIVE-A-DAY THE COMMUNITY WAY APPRECIATION DINNER," FROM A PROGRAM PREPARED BY THE TOURIST AND CONVENTION COMMITTEE OF GREATER JOHNSTOWN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, SEPTEMBER 7, 1961.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES							
CORNER	LATITUDE				LONGITUDE			LATITUDE			LONGITUDE	
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	EAST POINT:			EAST POINT:		
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"	40	19	33	75	55	32
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"	WEST POINT:			WEST POINT:		
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"	40	19	32	75	55	44

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: Less than 5 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: PENNSYLVANIA HISTORIC SITES AND LANDMARKS

ORGANIZATION: PENNSYLVANIA HISTORICAL AND MUSEUM COMMISSION DATE: JULY, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER: Box 1026

CITY OR TOWN: HARRISBURG STATE: PENNSYLVANIA CODE: 42

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

Owner of property notified 10/5/72
 As the designated State Liaison 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 National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:
 National State Local
 Name [Signature]
 State Liaison Officer
 Title Deputy Executive Director, Pa. Historical and Museum Commission
 Date 11/27/72

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.
[Signature]
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation
 Date _____
 ATTEST:

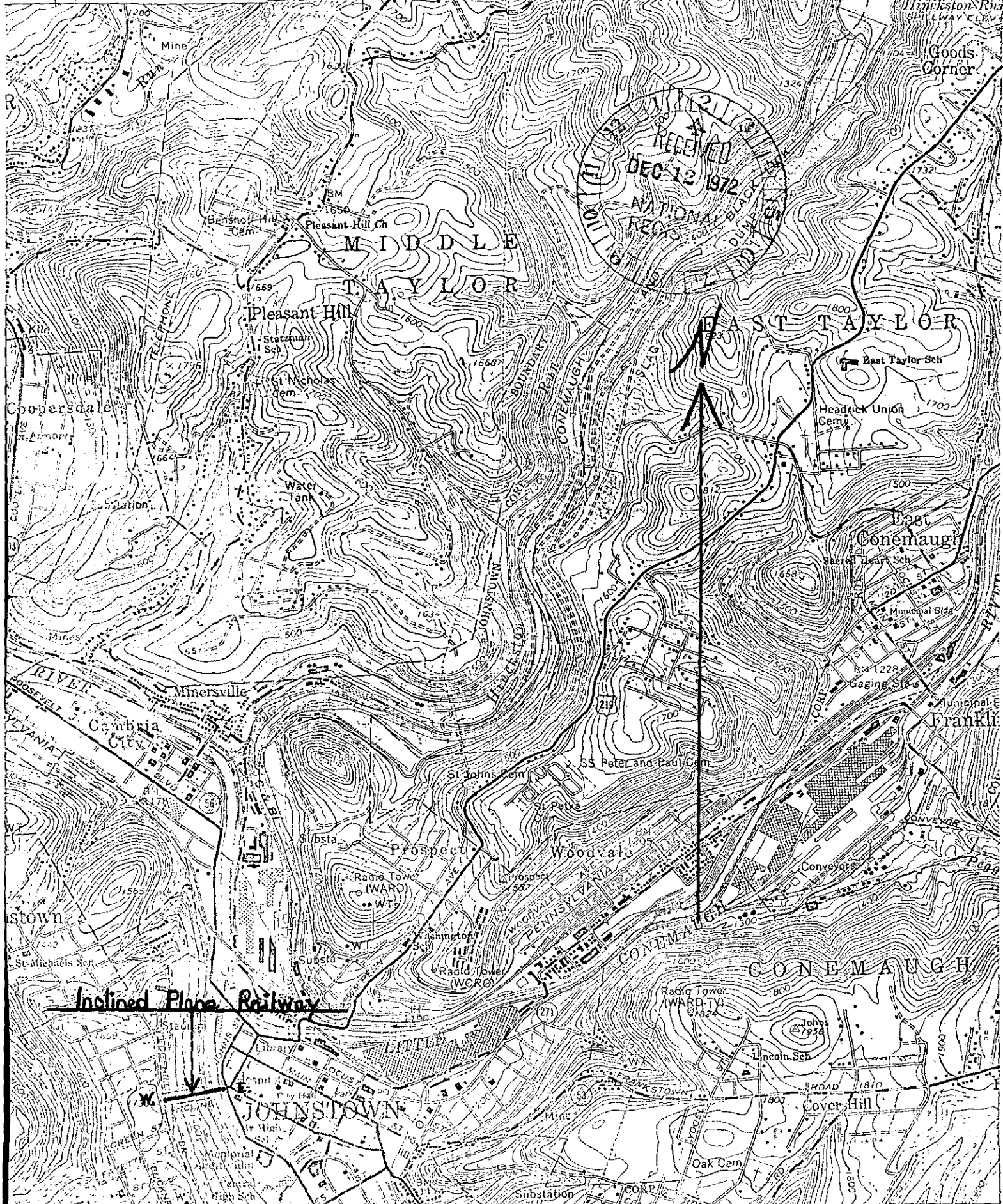
 Keeper of The National Register
 Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

East Point
Latitude $40^{\circ} 19' 33''$
Longitude $75^{\circ} 55' 32''$

West Point
Latitude $40^{\circ} 19' 32''$
Longitude $75^{\circ} 55' 41''$

JOHNSTOWN QUADRANT
PENNSYLVANIA
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOG)
Scale: 1:24000 SW/4 JOHNSTOWN 15' QUADRANT
1964



676

55' 677

678

1 680.000 FEET 679