

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM**

(NATIONAL HISTORIC

LANDMARKS) (Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Pennsylvania
COUNTY: Philadelphia
FOR NPS USE ONLY
ENTRY DATE

1. NAME

COMMON: Germantown

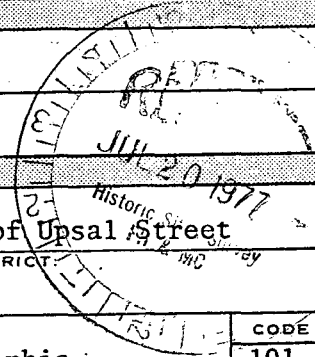
AND/OR HISTORIC: Colonial Germantown Historic District

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: From Windrim Avenue to southwest corner of Upsal Street

CITY OR TOWN: Germantown CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT: 2nd

STATE: Pennsylvania CODE: 42 COUNTY: Philadelphia CODE: 101



3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	Public Acquisition: <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC: Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted, <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No			

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Various--public and private--address inquiries to Philadelphia Historical Commission.

STREET AND NUMBER: Municipal Building

CITY OR TOWN: Philadelphia STATE: Pennsylvania CODE: 42

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Philadelphia City Hall

STREET AND NUMBER: Broad and Market Streets

CITY OR TOWN: Philadelphia STATE: Pennsylvania CODE: 42

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Buildings Survey (refer to individual buildings)

DATE OF SURVEY: various Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Library of Congress/Annex

STREET AND NUMBER: Division of Prints and Photographs

CITY OR TOWN: Washington STATE: D.C. CODE: 11

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" 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	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The numerous houses within the district illustrate the Germanic character of the early town, the diversity of occupations of its citizens and the Americanization of the community. However, many of the buildings' integrity has been destroyed. Following are a few brief descriptions of several structures which have managed to retain some degree of integrity within the urban sprawl.

Loudoun, 4650 Germantown Avenue, exemplifies the post-Revolutionary transformation of Germantown as Thomas Armat, a Philadelphia merchant, erected the house around 1801. Earlier Philadelphians had built homes in Germantown, but Armat's estate reflected the increasing domination of Philadelphia over Germantown. The house stands on a steep rise, on ground used as a hospital site during the famous battle. Despite the later addition of the front porch and various changes in the interior, the house's striking location and inherent dignity establish it as a significant structure of the district.

Grumblethorpe, 5267 Germantown Avenue, is an early example of a Germantown house built by a Philadelphian, John Wister, a merchant who built it as a summer house in 1744. The house represents the ultimate development of Germantown's own architectural style. The original structure is a two-and-a-half story stone building with a pent roof on all sides. A recent restoration has undone some alterations of 1808, and the house's exterior and interior now reflect the best of the inherent Germantown taste and style.

Wyck, 6026 Germantown Avenue, carries one back to the earliest days of Germantown, for the original section of the house was built in 1690 as a farm house. Expanded in the 18th-century and remodelled in 1824, the house, with its large plot of ground, brick terraces, arbor, smoke house, and granary, is a reminder of Germantown's agricultural beginnings. Of added interest is the fact that the British established a field hospital at Wyck during the Battle of Germantown. The house is rectangular in plan, the narrow side facing Germantown Avenue. It has three floors and an attic. The same family has owned Wyck since 1690.

Dirck Jansen built the Johnson House, 6306 Germantown Avenue, in 1765-68 for his son John Johnson, who was a tanner. The tannery stood behind the house, which is two and a half stories high, made of stone with a pent roof on the front and a gable roof.

Colonial Germantown's interest in education is represented by the Concord School, 6313 Germantown Avenue. Built in 1775, the stone, stucco covered, two-story building stands 25 feet back from the street. The school's original bell and belfry top the roof. Inside the schoolroom occupies almost the entire first floor. The teacher's desk used in the first years and ten pupils' desks still sit in the room. A library formerly occupied part of the second floor, which is now lived in by a caretaker.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

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7. Description: (1) Colonial Germantown Historic District

The original part of Upsala, 6430 Germantown Avenue, 1755, is hidden from view by the front section, which is a fine example of later Georgian with some Federal features. This section dates from 1798-1801, about the time of the construction of Loudoun. The front section of Upsala is stone, two and a half stories high. A handsome portico and door lead to the interior.

Cliveden, 6401 Germantown Avenue, served as British headquarters during the Battle of Germantown. As a result, Cliveden still exhibits cannon ball and musket shot scars. Built by Benjamin Chew in 1763-64, this handsome Georgian building and its lovely grounds form a dramatic end to the western end of the district. A national historic landmark itself, this recently restored structure is one of America's great historic houses.

BOUNDARY

The landmark boundary marks the original boundaries of Germantown designated in the early 18th century maps of German Township; beginning at the NW corner of the intersection of West Apsley Street and Germantown Avenue running approximately 200 feet SW along West Apsley Street to the SW corner of Loudon Park, then N 750 feet to the NW corner of Loudon Park, then E 200 feet to the rear property line of lots on the West side of Germantown Avenue, then NW 5,200 feet to the SE corner of Vernon Park, then SW 700 feet to the SW corner of Vernon Park, then 200 feet to the NW corner of Vernon Park, then E 1,000 feet to the rear property line of lots on the West side of Germantown Avenue, then N 5,300 feet to the SW corner of Germantown Avenue and West Sharpnack Street, then NE 400 feet to the intersection of East Sharpnack Street and the rear property line of lots on the east side of Germantown Avenue, then SW 1,100 feet to the NW corner of "Cliveden," then 590 feet NE along Cliveden Street to Morton Street, then SE 335 feet along Morton Street to East Johnson Street to Germantown Avenue (Cliveden consists of 235,650 square feet, more or less), then continuing SW 11,250 feet along the rear property line of lots on the East side of Germantown Avenue to the intersection of the said rear property lines with East Apsley Street, then along East Apsley SW 200 feet to beginning. Germantown Historic District consists of approximately 4,939,150 square feet or 113 acres, more or less, as shown on the survey map of the Germantown Historical Society.

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7. Description: (2) Colonial Germantown Historic District

Following is a list of buildings, compiled by the Philadelphia Historical Commission, which enumerates historic buildings on Germantown Avenue from Loudoun, 4650 Germantown Avenue to St. Michael's Lutheran Church:

Loudoun, c 1800, 4650 Germantown Avenue

- 4821 Germantown Avenue -- Mehl house, oldest part c 1763.
- 4825 Germantown Avenue -- Ottinger house, before 1785.
- 4901 Germantown Avenue -- Lower Burial Ground, c 1700.
- 4908 Germantown Avenue -- Wacksmuth-Henry house, c 1760, with early 19th-century additions.
- 5011 Germantown Avenue -- Royal house, Federal.
- 5058 Germantown Avenue -- General Wayne Hotel, Federal.
- 5106 Germantown Avenue -- Barron house, c 1820.
- 5112 Germantown Avenue -- built c 1809, part of Daniel King estate.
- 5139 Germantown Avenue -- Dorfenille house, c 1790.
- 5203-05 Germantown Ave. -- Owen Wister's birthplace.
- 5207 Germantown Avenue -- St. Stephen's Church, parish organized, 1856.
- 5213 Germantown Avenue -- Rectory, St. Stephen's M.E. Church, Federal.
- 5208 Germantown Avenue -- Baynton house, c 1795.
- 5214 Germantown Avenue -- Conyngham-Hacker house, c 1795.
- 5218 Germantown Avenue -- Howell house, c 1795.
- 5222-24 Germantown Ave. -- Theobald Endt house, c 1740
- 5226 Germantown Avenue -- John Bechtal house, 1742.
- 5267 Germantown Avenue -- Grumblethorpe Wister house, c 1740.
- 5269 Germantown Avenue -- Wister Tenant house, Colonial.
- 5275-77 Germantown Ave. -- Bank of Germantown (1825-69) c 1790.
- 5279 Germantown Avenue -- built prior to 1829.
- 5281 Germantown Avenue -- Folwell house, c 1790.
- 5283 Germantown Avenue -- Federal.
- 5300 Germantown Avenue -- Trinity Lutheran Church house, once property of Christopher Sower, built c 1770's also Trinity Lutheran Church, c 1840.
- 5305-15 Germantown Ave. -- Cottage Row, 1838-39.
- 5310-20 Germantown Ave. -- Victorian shop fronts, c 1870's.
- 5321 Germantown Avenue -- c 1790.
- 5324 Germantown Avenue -- early 19th century.
- 5326 Germantown Avenue -- 19th century.
- 5328 Germantown Avenue -- 19th century, rear possibly 18th century.
- 5330 Germantown Avenue -- built Philip Fisher, unfinished 1800.
- 5331-37 Germantown Ave. -- c 1850's.
- 5340 Germantown Avenue -- c 1800.
- 5344-48 Germantown Ave. -- Bulls' Head Market, 1859.

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7. Description: (3) Colonial Germantown Historic District

- 5419 Germantown Avenue -- St. Luke's Church, rectory and St. Margaret's house. Original church, 1818, and present building c 1875.
- Friends' burial ground -- and meeting house, property of Society of Friends' since 1693.
- 5423-27 Germantown Ave. Masonic Hall, c 1875.
- 5430 Germantown Avenue -- Ashmead house, c 1796.
- 5434 Germantown Avenue -- Ashmead house, c 1740, addition c 1796.
- 5435-41 Germantown Ave. -- shops and dwellings c 1842.
- 5442 Germantown Avenue -- Deshlar Morris house, 1772-74.
- 5443-45 Germantown Ave. -- Victorian shop, c 1870.
- 5448 Germantown Avenue -- Bringhurst property, built c 1760.
- 5450 Germantown Avenue -- c 1790.
- Market Square -- part of plan of Germantown since 1704.
- 5500-06 Germantown Ave. -- Bank of Germantown, now branch of Girard Trust, built 1868, addition 1906.
- 5501-05 Germantown Ave. -- Market Square, Fromberger house, c 1795.
- 5507-13 Germantown Ave. -- Market Square Presbyterian Church, 1st church, 1735, rebuilt 1839 and 1888.
- 5515 Germantown Avenue -- Parish house, c 1870's.
- 5517-19 Germantown Ave. -- Federal, c 1810.
- 5521 Germantown Avenue -- Delaphaine house (reconstructed 1960)
- Vernon, Vernon Park -- John Wister's house, "new" 1808.
- 5735 Germantown Avenue -- Reading RR station, c 1855.
- 5900-5902 Germantown Ave. -- built c 1828 by John Rittenhouse
- 5918-26 Germantown Ave. -- (cor. Haines) Colonial & Federal--5924 remodeled in Victorian style.
- 6000 Germantown Ave. -- Colonial structure, much altered.
- 6002 Germantown Ave. -- Victorian shop front.
- 6019 Germantown Ave. -- Green Tree Tavern, 1748.
- 6026 Germantown Ave. -- Wyck, older part dates from 1690, the whole remodeled by William Strickland, 1824.
- 6043 Germantown Avenue -- built before 1789, part possibly by Dr. Christopher Witt.
- 6112 Germantown Avenue -- Dirck Jansen house, rear portion is the older part, c 1750's, front Federal.
- 6119 Germantown Avenue -- Mennonite Meeting house, 1770, to replace an early log structure. First Mennonite Church in America.
- 6306 Germantown Avenue -- Johnson house, built 1765-68. Now property of Women's Club of Germantown.
- 6313 Germantown Avenue -- Concord School, built 1775.

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7. Description: (4) Colonial Germantown Historic District

- Upper Burying Ground -- set aside 1693, graves date from 1716.
- 6316 Germantown Avenue -- Peter Keyser house, c. 1760, with 19th century additions.
- 6320 Germantown Avenue -- possibly built c 1755 for Frederick Hesser, baker, 19th century additions.
- 6358 Germantown Avenue -- Sproegell house, rear wing built before 1762, front portion Federal.
- 6374 Germantown Avenue -- Anthony Gilbert house, built before 1762.

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8. Significance: (1) Colonial Germantown Historic District

In its earliest years, Germantown enjoyed unusual political freedom. Penn granted the community a charter in 1689, which became effective in 1691, that made Germantown a borough on the English order. Freedom evidently encouraged practices that displeased the proprietor and in 1707 the young town lost its charter. For many years after Germantown existed as a township, and then around the middle of the last century it became part of Philadelphia.

Although Germantown opposed an effort by the proprietary party to provide educational opportunities for the children in Germantown, the town established a school in 1749. Known as the Union School, it subsequently became the Germantown Academy. In March 1775, a second school, the Concord School, was established in upper Germantown to serve those children.

Industrial development paralleled the religious and educational growth in Germantown. William Rittenhouse founded America's first paper mill in 1690, creating a paper industry that operated until the middle of the 19th century. Christopher Sower's printing establishment made Germantown a center of the German press. In 1743 he published his famous German Bible, the first Bible printed in America in an European language. Textile mills and tanning yards flourished prior to 1800. Other occupations also contributed to the growth and wealth of the town.

The American Revolution and the winning of independence decisively affected Germantown. During the war, the Battle of Germantown on October 4, 1777, turned the peaceful community into a battlefield. Some years later Washington returned to Germantown because of the yellow fever in Philadelphia. He and his cabinet met in Germantown during November 1793, returning to Philadelphia around December 1. Most important, the post-Revolutionary years speeded up the Americanization of Germantown. General political, economic, and social events destroyed the community's remnants of isolation, and its unique character receded into history.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian | <input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 17th Century | <input type="checkbox"/> 19th Century | |

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1683, 1709, 1749-54

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 type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | | | |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Germantown, founded in 1683 by a group of Netherlanders fleeing religious persecution, contains some fifty 18th and early 19th century structures representing an architectural heritage of considerable interest. The settlement remained predominately Dutch until 1709, when large numbers of Germans began to settle there. By the 1750's Germantown had acquired the decidedly Germanic character that it was to retain for the remainder of the 18th century. Along historic Germantown Avenue between Windrim Avenue on the east and Upsal Street on the west are buildings which vary greatly in integrity but may still enable one to contemplate the flourishing early Germanic community, the diversity of occupations of its citizens and the gradual Americanization of its culture.

HISTORY

Religious persecution in Europe led to the establishment of Germantown. William Penn, traveled to the continent in 1671 and again in 1677, spreading the virtues of the Quaker doctrine. Francis Daniel Pastorius, rose to leadership, contacted Penn, obtained land, and directly stimulated migration.

The sailing of a number of Netherlanders to Pennsylvania in 1683 led to the founding of Germantown. Pastorius arrived on August 20 of that year, the other settlers reached Philadelphia on October 6, 1683. Germantown remained predominantly Dutch until 1709, when large numbers of Germans began to settle there. Those immigrants overwhelmed the settlement and gave it a decidedly Germanic character for most of the 18th century.

Germantown developed as a German-American community in a largely unhindered way, and by 1758 about 350 houses stood in the town, most of them occupied by Germans. German immigration had reached a peak between 1749-54, and the Germanic influence held sway for many following decades. Religion, education, and industry stand out in eighteenth-century Germantown. Diversity of beliefs existed in the community. German and Dutch Quakers in 1688 issued a protest against slavery, the first in English America. Mennonites and Dunkards both established the first churches of their respective denominations in America in Germantown. As the 1700's wore on, religious belief stayed strong.

(continued)

Germantown Avenue H.D.

