



# **Walking Tour Guide**

**Pennington Crossroads**

**Pennington Historic Sites Committee**

**P**ennington was settled circa 1708 and incorporated as a borough in 1890. It grew slowly so that it contains an eclectic but compatible mix of architectural styles. While only two or three 18th century buildings remain, many of the buildings constructed in the first half of the 19th century continued the stylistic traditions of the 18th. The buildings in this guide represent those buildings as well as a variety of other architectural styles from the Victorian era and early 20th century and many buildings of importance in the borough's history. The Pennington Crossroads area has been designated as a historic district by the Pennington Planning Board and is deemed eligible for nomination to the State and National Registers of Historic Places.

**1 2 Railroad Pl. The Former Reading RR Station.** (Cover Photograph) Constructed by Daniel Clarkson in 1882 in the Second Empire style. Service on the line began in 1876, providing Pennington with its first easy link with the outside world. In the early 1900s with over 50 trains daily, the station became the center of town life. This is the only Pennington building on the National Register of Historic Places. Note details including mansard roof with metal cresting, paired cornice brackets, umbrella frame canopy and pedimented archway over the pavilion.

**West Franklin Ave.** On both sides of this street are good examples of American Homestead and Foursquare style buildings constructed after the advent of the railroad in 1876. While the homestead house, with its open gable design, is a survival style of the classic American farmhouse, the Foursquare house was one of the first truly suburban styles in the United States.



**6 W. Franklin Ave.** Built between 1911 and 1925 in the Foursquare style with the classic clapboard 1st floor and natural brown shingle 2nd floor, highlighted by four dormers and a one-story wraparound porch supported by finely detailed columns and pedimented entrance.

3



**200 N. Main St.** One of the better examples of Italianate architecture in Pennington. Built in 1875 by George Corwine, its highlights include the two-story bays facing south and east, the window lights around the front door, and the gallery wraparound porch. It was expanded in 1935 by Dr. Geisenhoner to include his dentistry office.

### Turn Right on South Main St. Heading South

4



**111 N. Main St.** The northern half of the house was built in the 1780s and was expanded circa 1810 to its vernacular Federal style appearance. It is one of the very few 18th century buildings in Pennington. Its original clapboard siding was covered with wood shingles in the 20th century. This house belonged to the Cornell family, one of the original settlers of Pennington.

5



**73 N. Main St.** American Homestead style house built between 1895 and 1911, with the gable facing the side, the gallery front porch and simple architectural details. Although missing the middle window on the 2nd floor, this building received a 1989 Historic Preservation Award in the category of "Building Whose Architectural Integrity Has Been Well Maintained".

6



**70 N. Main St.** Bungalow built between 1911 and 1925. Note center dormer on south side, the gallery porch, and the roof with large overhang and exposed eaves.

7



**55 N. Main St.** Simple Greek Revival built in 1873 for Mrs. Eliza Vandyke who found it necessary to move into town after the death of her husband. She resided here with her daughter until her death in 1893. Original details include clapboard siding with fish scale wood shingles on gable end facing the street, wide overhang cornice with frieze and paired brackets, and gallery porch with restored original columns and railings.

8



**40 N. Main St.** Good example of the many Federal style or "I" houses in Pennington. Built before 1820 with evidence that the front and back were two separate structures. Note windows of six over six panes on the 2nd floor and nine over six on the 1st floor and the center door with its transom of cobalt blue lights. The roof was raised probably in the 19th century and the bracketed cornice added at that time.

9



**32 N. Main St.** Only Second Empire building in Pennington originally built as a residence for members of the Golden family between 1875 to 1887. It contains notable Second Empire details—such as the slate mansard roof, pedimented dormer windows, bracketed cornice and "L" posts—most of which have been restored in recent years.

10



**20 N. Main St.** (Borough Hall) Originally built by the International Order of Odd Fellows (I.O.O.F.) in 1891. Originally three stories, the 1st floor contained a restaurant and a pool hall; the 2nd and 3rd floors were used by the I.O.O.F. In 1897, the Fire Company rented half of the 1st floor for its fire engine. Note the double parapet gable on the upper facade and the

flush fan above the main center window between two smaller arched radiated windows. Became Borough Hall in 1929. Interior notable for pressed tin ceiling in what are now the Council Chambers on the 2nd floor. Front of the 1st floor was radically changed to a "colonial" appearance after WW II. At rear of building is the borough's former one room jail built circa 1911.

11



**1 N. Main St.** (Core States Bank Building) Built in 1926 in the neo-Georgian commercial style including the windows, the fan light over the doorway and a classic interior which was restored in 1984. This building replaced an 18th century building that originally was "The Brick Tavern House", later the Irving House.

**Turn right onto West Delaware Ave. heading West**

12



**15 W. Delaware Ave.** (Pennington Hardware) Built circa 1850 by Burd, Witter and Co. and continuously used as a hardware store. Good example of simple commercial Italianate style with decorative paired brackets, semi-elliptical windows on the 2nd floor, and the classic large commercial windows, along with an interior ceiling of pressed tin.

13



**124 W. Delaware Ave.** (Pennington School campus) Former Headmaster's House. Built circa 1850 as the Van Dyke family farmhouse and subsequently acquired by the School. The best example of the Gothic Revival style in Pennington. Note clapboard siding and vertical board and batten on 3rd floor, narrow

windows, decorative finials, highly decorative brackets, the kingpost truss at the pitch of the roof and the wraparound gallery porch.

**Also, on the campus note the following:**

the Lodge, a large, white clapboard Greek Revival building; the main brick classroom structure dating to 1838 with significant additions and changes in 1852, 1867, 1879 and 1885; and the heating plant of brick on Burd St., a good example of 1920's industrial design.

**For a side trip continue West on Delaware Ave. crossing Route 31**

On the south side of W. Delaware Ave. west of Route 31 is a group of four houses and a commercial structure dating from the advent (circa 1875) of the first railroad in Pennington, the short-lived Mercer and Somerset RR. Note the former depot building (now Suburban Wrench) with its Gothic Revival details and vertical board and batten siding and much of the original interior detailing. Also, 234 W. Delaware Ave., (Wenzel and Company, Advertising) the first home of Daniel Clarkson, the first mayor of Pennington, a fine example of the Homestead style, well restored with a recent addition, to the rear, in keeping with the original architecture. This building was a recipient of a 1989 Historic Preservation Award in the category of "New Addition Complementing Architecture of Original Building".

**For a side trip, turn south on Burd St. to Academy Ave.**

On the east side of Burd St. is a group of vernacular houses in the Italianate and Homestead styles built circa 1850 to 1875, most likely for workers employed locally by: the Pennington School, a steam saw mill (located on what is now Pennington School property) and Isaac Bergen, a harness maker, carriage maker and blacksmith, whose business was located on the north side of W. Delaware Ave.

14



**14, 16 and 18 W. Delaware Ave.** This group of three bay, side door homes is an excellent grouping of Federal style houses, built circa 1855. The doorways provide the most interesting architectural detail coupled with the basic siting of the buildings in relation to the others and to the street.

**Turn right onto S. Main St. heading South**

15



**60 S. Main St.** First United Methodist Church. The third church building used by the Methodists, the second religious congregation in Pennington organized circa 1770. The church was built in 1845, with the

dress field stone and stucco front added in 1876. Much of the front was recently restored.

**For a side trip, turn right on Academy Ave. heading West**

On the north side of the street is the Pennington Academy building, built in 1899 and expanded in 1906, and now part of the Academy Court condominiums. Across the street is the predecessor school, now the First Baptist Church, constructed in 1857 and moved to this location in 1898. The Baptists were the fifth religious congregation to organize in Pennington. The intersecting street, Crawley St., named after the Baptists' first minister, was developed at the turn of the century by the church's congregants and includes an interesting group of Homestead and Colonial Revival style houses.

16



**126 S. Main St.** Built circa 1833-40 and known for Joseph B. Wiggins, Tobacconist, who manufactured cigars in the two story southerly wing between 1870 and 1900. Note high pitched gable roof, boxed wooden cornice with gutters, paired brackets and frieze. This building received a 1990 Preservation Award in the category of "Building Whose Architectural Integrity Has Been Well Maintained".

17



**132 S. Main St.** Built 1824-25 and known as Smith Jay's Tavern. An excellent example of local Federal style and the last known remaining tavern building in Pennington. Note clapboard siding, center door with unusual gothic arch transom, 2nd floor windows of six over six panes and 1st floor windows of nine over six.

**For a side trip, continue south on S. Main St. to Curlis Ave.**

Most noteworthy is the African Methodist Episcopal (A.M.E.) church on the west side of Main St. This congregation, the third oldest in Pennington, organized in 1816. Its church building, circa 1875, is an excellent example of simple Gothic Revival style and serves as the focal point of a historically important grouping of vernacular Federal and Homestead style buildings, some dating to the early 1800s.

**Cross Main Street and turn north.**

18



**209 S. Main St. Constructed in 1841-42.**

Historically important as a Presbyterian parsonage (1842-55 and 1870-1920) and as the home of Miss Hale who operated Evergreen Hall a school for women in the building to the north. Note many interesting architectural details including: the door surrounded by four pane lights on sides and a six pane transom; the Adamesque design above the windows in the dormers, and the one story columned porch.

20



**143 S. Main St.** Constructed in 1826 as the Methodist Episcopal Church, that congregation's second building, with common brick bond in the Federal style. Noteworthy is the entrance facing Main St. with its highly decorative two-pane transom and side lights. Building was converted to residential use in 1845.

19



**205 S. Main St.** Constructed in 1836 as a school for women and subsequently known as Evergreen Hall. Designed by Augustine M. VanKirk, this three-story brick building is now a private residence. Note the Flemish bond brick, the boxed cornice, the frieze decorated with dentil design, the double door with dentil design and the fan light above.

21



**141 S. Main St.** Built circa 1837 as a wheelwright shop by George Laning and converted to residential use in the late 19th century. A good example among



many in Pennington of adaptive reuse of a non-residential building for residential purposes.

22



**117 S. Main St.** Built in 1848 for Dr. Henry Well-  
ing, this is the best example of the Greek Revival style  
in Pennington. Giving the effect of a Greek temple, its  
noteworthy features include the frieze with triglyphs  
across the front, the circular window with a wheel  
design in the attic, and the pediment above the en-  
tranceway. The building was fully restored in recent  
years and received a 1989 Historic Preservation Award  
for the restoration.

23



**63 S. Main St.** (Professional Center's main build-  
ing) Originally a three-bay farmhouse built in the 19th

century, this building was greatly expanded in the  
Georgian Revival style by William P. Howe, Sr. circa  
1912. Although some of the architectural details from  
that expansion have been lost, this imposing building  
still retains an exceptional doorway and fanlight.

24



**13 S. Main St., Presbyterian Church.** This  
brick Gothic Revival style church, built in 1874-75  
after a fire destroyed its predecessor, is the fourth  
structure on this general site. The Presbyterian con-  
gregation, the first religious group in Pennington,  
organized circa 1709. The adjoining cemetery contains  
the grave sites of many prominent Penningtonians and  
legend tells us that when the Hessians occupied the  
church, the wall paralleling Main St. was used by  
them to exercise their horses in the winter of 1776  
shortly before the Battle of Trenton. British General  
Cornwallis stayed in an inn, located across the street,  
that was demolished circa 1904.

**Turn right on Delaware Ave.  
heading East**

25



**19 E. Delaware Ave.** This classic five bay Federal style house dates to the first half of the 19th century. Note the doorway and its pediment with dentil detailing.

26



**23 E. Delaware Ave.** This is the only Stick style house in Pennington. It was constructed circa 1891 by Charles Taylor of the Bergen and Taylor Carriage Co. It incorporates the use of decorative shingles on the 3rd floor and clapboard on the 2nd and 1st floors. Also note: the decorative version of half-timbering, or applied stickwork as exposed framing, that appears to support the building; the pyramidal turret in the Queen Anne manner on the left; the decorative truss in sunburst design in front gable; the door with

the door with stained glass windows, and a three light recessed transom. Also, note the garage which received a 1990 Preservation Award in the category of "New Addition Complementing the Architecture of the Original Building".

**Turn left on Eglantine Ave. heading North**

27



**St. James Church.** The Roman Catholics were the fourth religious congregation in Pennington, organizing in 1875. This, their first church, was built in 1899 in a simple Gothic Revival style; originally it was covered with wood shingles. The current wall covering hides a stained glass window above the front door. The interior is noteworthy for its wood ceiling and stained glass windows.

28



**12 Eglantine Ave.** A good example of Four-square style, this house was built circa 1900 by Col. John Kunkel to help promote his new development. Note: the stone 1st floor and wood shingles on the 2nd floor and dormer; the beveled glass door; the dentil detail under the eaves; the two-story bay on the northerly side with a stained glass window in middle, and the gallery porch across front with six round wood columns.

29



**14 Eglantine Ave.** This is another structure built by Col. Kunkel circa 1900. It is a good example of simplified shingled Queen Anne style with a turreted bay in front. Note unusual etched and painted glass window on second floor of bay, the sleepy eye window on the left in the roof, and the etched glass door.

### Side trip north on Eglantine Ave.

Eglantine Ave. was subdivided and developed by Colonel Kunkel beginning in the late 1890s. This wide street, with its deep setbacks and relatively large lots, has the appearance of a boulevard. Some unusual and interesting suburban architectural styles are found here including English Cotswold Cottage, Renaissance Revival, Foursquare and various forms of 20th century Colonial Revival.

### Return to East Delaware Ave. and continue East

30



31



**115 and 121 E. Delaware Ave.** A pair of superb Shingle style homes built circa 1895. Both have the classic stone 1st floor with wood shingles on the 2nd and 3rd floors and dormers. The former, now the St. James Rectory, has lost some of its architectural

details but retains the multi-columned porch with its heavy porch roof line and portico to the left. Note also the unusual stained glass window on the westerly side of the house on the 1st landing of an interior staircase. The latter, known as Stony Brook Lodge, was built by Colonel John Kunkel as his home. In recent years, it was extensively restored on both the inside and outside. Note the conical bay and turret on the left, the Adamesque design beneath the roof of the conical bay, and the pedimented entryway above the porch.

## Other Buildings and Areas of Note

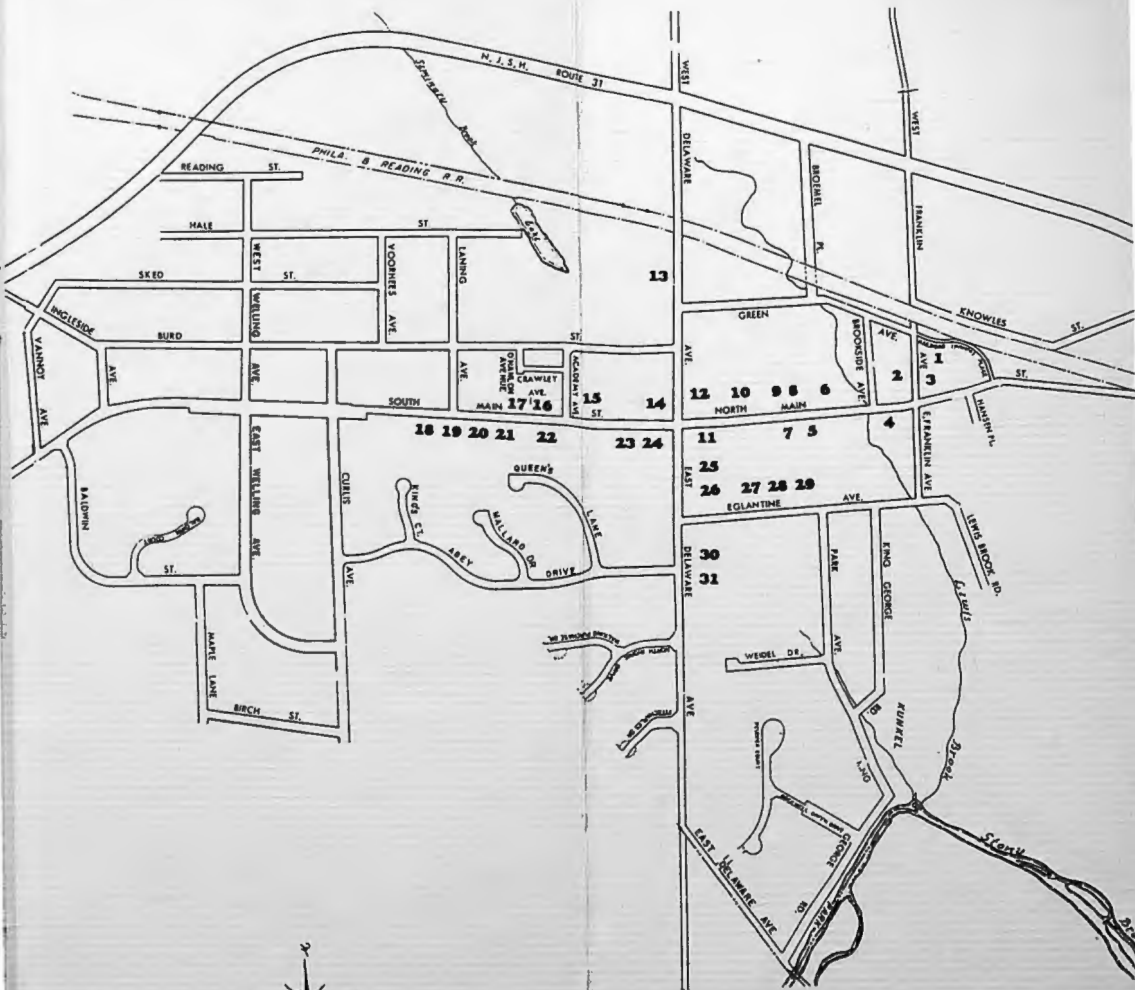
While visiting Pennington, you may wish to view some other buildings of architectural and historic interest.

- **417 S. Main St.**, known as the Tollgate House for when it served as the home of the toll collector between 1854 and the 1880s for the Hopewell and Ewing Street Turnpike.
- **410 S. Main St.**, a former farmhouse radically changed circa 1915 by William P. Howe, Sr., as his second home in Pennington. Note the columned porch.
- **The "Howe Tract" and the "Curtis Tract"** west and east of South Main St, respectively, contain an excellent collection of pre-World War II 20th century suburban type homes in the Foursquare, Homestead, Cotswold Cottage and various Colonial Revival styles.
- **"Straube Center"** on West Franklin Ave., reachable from Route 31 or Knowles St. Originally a factory and serving many uses, including Cointreau, Ltd., this stone building has been converted to office and school use and represents an excellent example of adaptive reuse.

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# Pennington Borough

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