

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JAN 11 1977  
DATE ENTERED AUG 3 1977

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

\*\*

Plaster Mill

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

300 ft. south of intersection of Main St. & Kelly Pl.

--- NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Stanhope

--- VICINITY OF

13th

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

New Jersey

034

Sussex

037

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

---DISTRICT

PUBLIC

---OCCUPIED

---AGRICULTURE

---MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

---PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

---COMMERCIAL

---PARK

---STRUCTURE

---BOTH

---WORK IN PROGRESS

---EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

---SITE

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

**ACCESSIBLE**

---ENTERTAINMENT

---RELIGIOUS

---OBJECT

---IN PROCESS

---YES: RESTRICTED

---GOVERNMENT

---SCIENTIFIC

---BEING CONSIDERED

---YES: UNRESTRICTED

---INDUSTRIAL

---TRANSPORTATION

see continuation sheet

NO

---MILITARY

---OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Borough of Stanhope

STREET & NUMBER

77 Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Stanhope

--- VICINITY OF

STATE

New Jersey

07874

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Sussex County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Newton

STATE

New Jersey

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

New Jersey Historic Sites Inventory

DATE

1976

---FEDERAL  STATE ---COUNTY ---LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Dept. of Environmental Protection P.O. Box 1420

CITY, TOWN

Trenton

STATE  
New Jersey

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input 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 plaster mill in Stanhope, constructed in the early 1800's as a mill building, was converted into iron works tenant housing in ca. 1840. It is a 3 1/2 story mill structure that is built into a bank so that only 1 1/2 stories are above ground on the northwest side. The full 3 1/2 stories are exposed on the southwest facade. The Morris Canal, opened in 1831, passed immediately adjacent to the mill. A small branch of the canal, that extended over to the iron furnaces at Stanhope, intersected the main canal directly in front of the northwest facade of the mill. Remnants of both of these waterways remain.

The plaster mill has load bearing, fieldstone rubble walls that are about 2 ft. thick and have been covered by an exterior stucco finish. The gambrel roof of the mill has two clapboard sided shed dormers, one on the northwest side and the other on the southwest side. These two dormers might well be additions from the ca. 1840 conversion into tenant housing. The roof rafters are rounded, with only the top side squared to receive the planking and composition roof that now takes the place of the original split shingles. Two small brick chimneys, which were used by stoves on the 3 upper levels of the mill, extend from the northwest side of the gambrel roof.

Both the windows and doors of the mill have wooden frames and lintels. Several of the doors, particularly those on the northeast gable end, have been altered during the ca. 1840 remodeling. They have been changed from the wide loft doors to narrower openings, remade into windows or completely closed up. Many of the remaining doorways have batten doors with thumb latches. The removal of a hoist above the top loft door of the northeast gable end is also apparent in the masonry. All of the windows of the mill were also made narrower during the 1840 conversion to tenant housing. They are deeply recessed into the thick stone walls and thus have very wide sills. Brick was used to convert the original wide windows into the smaller double sash openings with the 6 over 6 panes. The southwest gable end of the mill is a 12 ft. addition, probably added to the main building during the ca. 1840 construction. Both the northwest and southeast extension walls were constructed of load bearing stone and blend with the original walls so that the addition is not really apparent. The southwest gable end is constructed of frame and clapboard with only the first story of stone.

When converted into workers' housing, the mill was subdivided so that there were 3 apartments on each of the first 3 levels. The 4th floor served as a second level for the apartments located on the 3rd floor. Three doorways on each of the first 3 levels of the mill serve as the entrances to each of the apartments. There are no interior doors between apartments on the first and second floors. Several of the apartment entrances are reached by a flight of cut stone stairs that lead down into the rooms that are partly beneath ground level. Since the mill is built into a hillside, the first floor is 10 ft. narrower than the levels above, thus a 10 ft. wide area of the second level has only dirt beneath it.

The first level of the plaster mill has three single room apartments. The stone walls are not plastered on the inside and the floors are dirt. Wooden tongue and groove board partitions separate the three rooms. A large summer beam, measuring 8" by 11", extends lengthwise across the 3 rooms and is supported by four massive, upright beams. All of these supports are sawn timbers. The second level floor joists are mortised into the stone exterior walls and are notched to fit over the summer beam.

(See continuation sheet)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
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Plaster Mill  
Stanhope Borough  
Sussex County

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Description Continued:

The second floor is divided into 3, two room apartments. The exterior walls are plastered right over the stone. The interior walls are plastered over lath. All of the plaster in the mill has a very high animal hair content. There are two summer beams with upright posts running through these second level apartments. All of the beams and posts on this floor, and those above have chamfered edges. Some of the rooms have a wainscoting consisting of 7 in. wide planks running parallel with the floor. Other rooms have just a chair rail height 7 in. wide plank around the room. The northwest facade windows of the second level are shorter than those in the rest of the building since they are partly below ground level. The ceilings are all covered with 8 in. wide tongue and groove boards. The flooring consists of 7 3/4 in. tongue and groove boards laid over older random width planks. Baseboards consist of a vertical plank with the plaster extending down on top of it.

The third floor has another set of three, 2 room apartments, each with stairwa that lead to two rooms above. The stairway in the middle apartment has been removed. Once again, the plaster is applied right on the sotne exterior walls and on lath on the interior walls. The plank wainscoting and chair rail is also present within the rooms. The ceilings are covered by the tongue and groove boards and the floors are also tongue and groove over the earlier random width planking. All of the doors are batten, some with thumb latches. The three northern rooms have dish cupboards constructed of vertical planking and have batten doors closing off the foot of the stairs.

The fourth floor is of the same construction as the lower levels, with plaster walls and tongue and groove ceilings and floors. Some of the supporting timbers are exposed in the large central room where empty mortiseholes indicate the revision from mill purposes to apartment subdivision.

Although the building has been remodeled from its original mill construction, it stands today only slightly changed from the ca. 1840 apartment subdivision. Hardly any modernization has taken place except for the addition of the tongue and groove boards over the older flooring and on the ceilings. No central heating or plumbing has been added and electricity is very limited.

# 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 type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES \_\_\_\_\_ BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The plaster mill in Stanhope is the oldest surviving industrial building in a community that once was an early iron manufacturing complex of the 19th Century. It was initially constructed in the early 1800's by the iron company as a water powered mill to produce plaster. By ca. 1840, it was enlarged and converted into a multiple family tenant dwelling, serving to house workers from the recently completed furnace complex. It was at this time that three anthracite blast furnaces, the first in the state of New Jersey, were being erected at Stanhope. Numerous families, many of which were Irish immigrants, resided in the plaster mill during the second half of the 19th Century. During the first two decades of this century, the old mill continued as tenant housing for a new wave of immigrants - Russians and Poles.

Although no exact date of construction for the mill has been ascertained, it is obviously a product of the early 19th Century. It might well have been constructed by Silas Dickerson, who established the early iron forges at Stanhope and was responsible for the erection of several other early industrial structures in the community. Dickerson came to Stanhope in 1794 and remained there until his accidental death in 1807 (Snell 1881:466, Sussex County Deeds Bk. P pg 483).

The first documentation on the plaster mill is to be found on an 1828 Morris Canal & Banking Co. map, which indicates the early community of Stanhope and the proposed canal route through the town center. The plaster mill is shown as being adjacent to both the Morris Canal and the Morris and Sussex Turnpike. A waterway, extending from the canal and over to the mill, is shown as a raceway, which then passes down the hill for reuse in a gristmill power system. An oldtimer's account in an 1888 local newspaper completely describes the plaster mill's location and its relationship to the canal and turnpike exactly as indicated on this map. The owner of the mill and iron forges listed on the map was Gamaliel Bartlett who had acquired the property in 1820 from Henry McFarlan (1828 Morris Canal & Banking Co. Map; The Stanhope Eagle Jan. 25, 1888; Sussex County Deeds Bk. P-2 Pg 407).

The mill and iron works tract passed from Bartlett in 1833 to Stephen Van Rensselaer J Henry McFarlan and Daniel Ayres (Sussex County Deeds Bk. o-3 pg 234). In 1835, it was conveyed to Robert P. Bell, and in April of 1840, it passed to Jacob O. Drake (Sussex County Deeds Bk. Q-3 pg 479; Bk. Y-3 pg 160). This deed to Drake makes specific mention of the plaster mill. It conveyed "...all and singular the machinery, fixtures and appurtenances now being in, about or appertaining to the said grist mill, forge, saw mill, bark mill, tannery, plaster mill, sash factory, and store houses, also the platform and scales in front of the store houses and tavern ... and all the building materials such as frames, on the said premises for finishing the plaster mill." (Sussex County Deeds Bk. Y-3 pg 160).

This renovation mentioned at the plaster mill is most likely a 12 ft. addition to the  
 (See continuation sheet)

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Map and field notes of the Norris Canal & Banking Co, Stanhope - Western Division #:  
Lorenzo A. Sykes, Engineer, 1828.
- Map of Stanhope, Real Estate Department of Lehigh Valley Railroad Company;
- Map of lands lying in Stanhope, New Jersey and vicinity, Benj. Roome & Son  
Surveyors, 1858.
- Map of Sussex County, 1860

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre  
UTM REFERENCES

A	1, 8	5, 2, 4, 5, 6, 0	4, 5, 2, 7, 6, 6, 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

(Terry Karschner, Historic Sites Section, DEP  
609-292-2023)

Brian H. Morrell

October 4, 1976

ORGANIZATION

Musconetcong Foundrymen Historical Society

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

RD #1, Box 36 J

201 - 347-3728  
TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Flanders

STATE

New Jersey

# 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 National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*David J. Baulin*

TITLE

Commissioner, Department of Environmental Protection

DATE

December 20, 1976

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DATE

*8/3/77*  
*8.1.77*

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Stanhope Borough  
Sussex County New Jersey 034

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Significance continued:

southwest gable end of the structure which is apparent after examination of the building today. Both the southeast and northwest walls of the addition were constructed of load bearing stone, while the new southwest gable end was of frame and clapboard. This 12 ft. extension of the plaster mill would seem to be rather small to provide additional mill space, but was large enough to provide another set of tenant apartments on each level of the southwestern end of the structure. This was also at the period when the Morris & Sussex Manufacturing Co. (formed in Feb. 1835 to manufacture cotton, wood, iron and window sash (New Jersey Alws of 1835:III) was about to purchase the ironworks property at Stanhope and commence construction of their anthracite blast furnaces (New Jersey Laws of 1841:38). The transition from a small, two forge operation to a large furnace complex would necessitate many more laborers and this create a need fro tenant housing. Weighing allof there facts together, it seems logical to hypothesize that this renovation of the plaster mill in 1840 reflects the time of its conversion from a plaster mill to tenant housing.

The Morris & Sussex Manufacturing Co. (later known as the Stanhope Iron Co.) purchased the entire iron works tract, including the plaster mill, in June 1840 (Sussex County Deeds Bk. C-4 pg 388). The mill was also owned by the succeeding iron companies - The Sussex Iron Company (1848-1865), the Musconetcong Iron Works (1865-1918) and the Singer Manufacturing Company (1902-1929) Sussex County Deed Bks. L-4 pg 639; P-5 pg 29; R-11 pg 267; 430 pg 84).

Rental books from the Musconetcong Iron Works reveal that up to nine families were living in theplastermill between 1870-90. Monthly rent ran from \$2.25 to \$2.50. The tenants of the mill, many of which were first or second generation Irish immigrants, were almost all employed by the iron company (1870-90. original Musconetcong Iron Works Rental Books; U.S. Census 1870, 1880 for Sussex Co. Byram Township.)

During the 20th century, the millhoused up to about 20 families of Russian and Polish immigrants who had come to work at the Musconetcong Iron Works, later the Singer Foundry (personal communication Mrs. Hazel Drake). In 1929, Salom Brithers Inc. purchased the plaster mill along with a great deal of what was left of the iron works tract of land. From this time up until 1975, the mill was rented out as a one family dwelling. In 1976, megotiations were begun to donate this historic structure to the Borough of Stanhope to be preserved and restored for use as a town library and museum. The plaster mill remains today as an example of both early industrial buildings and immigrant laborer housing of New Jersey's 19th century iron communities.

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Plaster Mill  
Stanhope Borough  
Sussex County

~~NEW JERSEY~~

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Bibliography Continued

Musconetcong Irons Works Original Rental Books , 1870-1890.

New Jersey Laws of 1835 and 1841

Snell, James P., History of Sussex and Warren Counties, New Jersey, Philadelphia:  
Everts & Peck, 1881.

Stanhope Eagle, January 25, 1888: 2

Sussex County Deeds: Book P - 2, pg. 407  
O - 3, pg. 234  
Q - 3, pg. 479  
Y - 3, pg. 160  
C - 4, pg. 388  
L - 4, pg. 639  
P - 5, pg. 29  
R -11, pg. 267  
430, pg. 84

U.S. Census for Sussex County, Byram Township 1870 and 1880.

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51: NR 10-3-77

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

**PLASTER MILL**

STANHOPE BORO, SUSSEX COUNTY - 035

NEW JERSEY - 34

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ADDENDA

This letter is notification of the February 8, 1977 fire at the Plaster Mill in Stanhope. The blaze, which was undoubtedly arson, continued for six hours and totally destroyed the gambrel roof. The top floor (4th floor) was severely damaged, although several of the interior partitions on this level remain intact. Some superficial damage was also caused by the fire on the third floor. This consists predominantly of charred woodwork, ceilings, etc. The load bearing stone walls and the first two levels of the mill remain untouched by the blaze.

The opinion of Albin H. Rothe, Architect and Herbert Githens, Preservation Planner concerning the damage to the Plaster Mill is as follows:

"Acknowledging that the recent fire has severely damaged the roof, its framing and interior partitions, the basic structure remains intact. The perimeter walling of substantial stone masonry remains fundamentally undamaged. The heavy timber columns and beams, although charred, still offer considerable support. The chimneys stand, somewhat precariously, but nonetheless intact. Consequently, the fire has not damaged the structural or historical integrity of this shell ... For the reasons sited above, we find the restoration and adaptive re-use of the Stanhope Plaster Mill to be feasible."

In addition to the above, although the roof and much of the fourth floor will have to be rebuilt, enough of the original fabric remains so that it can be recorded and the information used to accurately restore this section of the mill.

At present the Musconetcong Foundrymen Historical Society is making numerous applications for funding to being stabilization and restoration procedures. Soon Rothe and Githens will be initiating the recording stage so that specifications for restoration can be formulated.