

PH0011321

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Delaware	
COUNTY: New Castle	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	FEB 1 1972

1. NAME

COMMON:
Rockland *Historic District*

AND/OR HISTORIC:
Kirk's Ford, Youngstown

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Where Rockland Road and Mt. Lebanon Road join the
Brandywine and Routes 232 and 235

CITY OR TOWN:
Rockland

STATE Delaware	CODE 10	COUNTY: New Castle	CODE 003
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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 type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) _____ _____ _____

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Too numerous to list

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:
New Castle County Court House

STREET AND NUMBER:
Rodney Square

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE

Wilmington Delaware 10

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Junior League Historic Buildings Survey and HABS

DATE OF SURVEY: 1962-1964 Federal State County Local

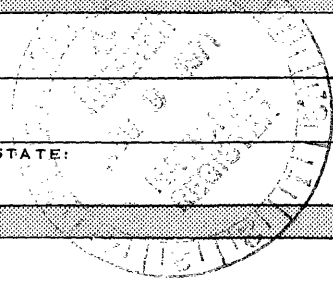
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Historical Society of Delaware

STREET AND NUMBER:
509 Market Street

CITY OR TOWN: STATE: CODE

Wilmington Delaware 10

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	

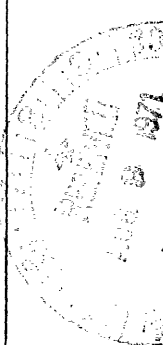
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

It is at Rockland that the Brandywine starts its five mile descent to the tide waters, dropping 124 feet and providing the power for its many mills. Steep wooded hills descend to the Brandywine at Rockland where the full force of the river was dammed in 1794. The West bank is opened by two rolling hills and farm land by Wilson's Run, a stream that furnished power to the Rockland Mills in the 18th century. This area in back of Wilson's Run is now a State Nature Park. The East bank rises sharply to a plateau. This farm area is now given over to suburban housing and The Du Pont Country Club.

The hamlet of Rockland, halfway between Wilmington and the Pennsylvania State Line, was and still is a mill town. On either bank, joined by a bridge which was covered until 1934, are workers' houses. Although the community is now less autonomous without local stores, it still has its own Post Office. The school on top of the East bank's ridge stands as it did when built in 1831, although it has been adapted for private dwelling since 1930. There is the nearby Mt. Lebanon Methodist Church not far from the original Presbyterian Church that the mill owner, William Young, built for his workers on one slab of stone, and now razed. Further back on the plateau of the East bank on Black Gates Road is the Mansion House of William Young. This handsome whitewashed stone house was built in 1802. Raised on a grass terrace surrounded by stone walls, the two-story house with attic measure 50' x 34'. There are two identical five-bay facades on the East and West. The wood shingled, hip roof is topped with a small cornice under an almost flat metal roof which originally had a railing. Prominent brick chimneys are on each end. The two wood dormers with pitched shingle roof and arch topped window with Gothic muntins have nice detailing of keys and bands. The six-paneled front door with sidelights is flanked by pilasters supporting an arch with a large fan light. A hipped-roof porch protrudes, supported by square fluted columns with a flight of wood steps descending. The house has been little changed since it was built. It has a handsome, free-standing staircase in the entrance hall. The kitchen wing on the North end has had modifications.

The workers' houses, depicted so often by local painters, are set along the roads and on ridges of the hills. Simple stone, rectangular two-story buildings, they are whitewashed with one-story wooden shed, roofed porches, and square attic windows in the gabled ends. There are fewer of these houses than there were, although the mill itself is enlarged. Part of the original mills' walls remain, but they are insignificant in comparison to the large new buildings added by Concel, Inc. An excellent example of an early mill does still exist however, on the West bank. Once belonging to the Heshbon Factory, it still stands on top of the steep, rounded hill North of Wilson's Run where road #232 meets the Brandywine. It is a large, long, stone mill 83' x 21' with two stories on the East and three on the West side. Stone buttresses retain this wall. The wood shingled, pitched roof is continuous, end to end, with two slim

SEE INSTRUCTIONS



6. SIGNIFICANCE

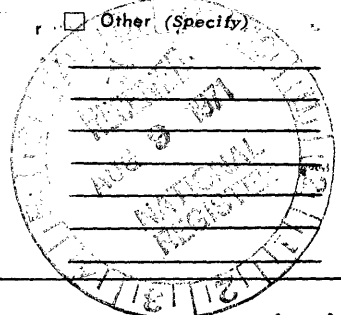
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

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 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

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Rockland represents one of the earliest and longest functioning mill areas on the Brandywine. John Gregg and Adam Kirk had a grist mill on the West bank in 1724. The East bank is still being used by Concel, Inc. Rockland could serve as a miniature example of American Industrial history. Starting with the smaller tributary's water power used in the 18th century for mills that were family run for local needs, it progressed to the 19th century mills using the full river's power and meeting the demands of a national market. Rockland is particularly significant in the history of textiles. The first fulling mill of Delaware was built here in 1733, and in the early 1800's the stone mill that stands on the West bank housed some of the earliest cotton-spinning machinery in the United States. Paper was produced at Rockland also. In 1800, William Young was supplying paper to the U.S. Treasury, and paper has been produced on and off since then.

Rockland is interesting as a small mill town with its variety of mill owners' homes, workers' houses, and some good examples of vernacular architecture, barns, and springhouses. The Springhouse represents one of the earliest buildings done by the settlers. To keep the water source pure, small tight stone houses were built to protect the spring from leaves, animals, reptiles. Great care went into these small buildings throughout the 18th and 19th centuries and were an ever-present part of the Brandywine scene. They are now disappearing. A very handsome example of a springhouse adjoins land to Montchanin. According to family sources, the house was built in 1694 by John Gregg. If this is so, it would represent one of the earliest mill owner's house for it was John Gregg with Adam Kirk who ran the grist and saw mill at Rockland, and certainly represents the era of the early Quaker settlers that owned so much land on the Brandywine.

The other mill owner's house on the West bank built by Caleb Kirk in 1797, burned in 1881 and rebuilt in the same style and place in 1885. The present stone storage barn next to this house was the original mill for the Heshbon Factory, housing the early cotton-spinning machinery. Cloth caused the early move to an industrial process outside the family. The need to soften the house-woven material needed a professional dexterity, and often present along with the basic mills of grist and saw, was the fulling mill. This



9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Primary Sources

American Watchman, June 27, 1810; July 18, 1810; Dec. 7, 1811; Nov. 8, 1815; March 1, 1822; June 3, 1823; Jan. 13, 1826.
 Assessment List, Christiana Hundred, 1815. Delaware State Archives, Dover, Delaware.
 Bancroft, Joseph, "Notebook Kept While at Young Mill," Joseph Bancroft and Sons Co., Inc., Records, Wilmington, Delaware.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			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
NW	39° 48' 10"	75° 34' 40"	0		
NE	39° 47' 59"	75° 34' 02"			
SE	39° 47' 26"	75° 34' 17"			
SW	39° 47' 43"	75° 34' 55"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 160

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
Eleanor M. Webster, Consultant to

ORGANIZATION: Tri-County Conservancy of the Brandywine, Inc. DATE: _____

STREET AND NUMBER:
Box 141

CITY OR TOWN: Chadds Ford STATE: Pennsylvania CODE: _____

12 STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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: *Rea Shickel*
 Title: Historic Registrar, State Liaison Officer
 Date: July 6, 1971

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Ernest A. Connelly
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: FEB 1, 1972

ATTEST:
Stephen R. Woodford
 Keeper of The National Register
 Date: Jan 10, 1972

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STATE	
Delaware	
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	FEB 1 1972

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7. DESCRIPTION (cont'd.)

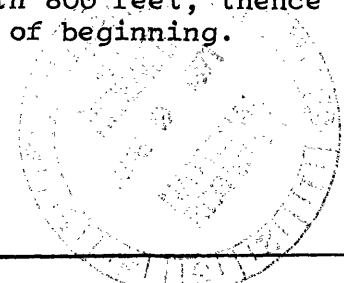
chimneys. The interior of the mill has been modified to fit the changing needs of the building. Used consecutively as stables, barn, living, and storage, it is in disrepair. There is still a mill wheel in the top story on the North end recording earlier industrial functions of the building. The original Gregg and Kirk Saw and Grist Mill that was where Wilson's Run joins the Brandywine, was transformed in the early 1900's into a six family dwelling house. It was known as The Kirk, but has been torn down. The bed of the raceway can be seen along road #232 that runs from Adam's Dam to Rockland.

On the hill next to the stone mill of the Heshbon Factory was The Kirk House. Built in 1797, it was badly burned and rebuilt in 1885. The exterior features of the house still keep the earlier Federal feeling. The House has a T-shaped plan. It has a three-story facade to the South with four bays, the top story having small square sash windows. Double parlors cover this facade on the interior with handsome identical black marble mantels of the early period. Numerous wings have been added.

The earliest mill owner's house, Rock Spring, is on road #235 from Rockland to Montchanin. It is a narrow 28' x 17' stone house, three stories high with an attic. The plan has two rooms on each floor, one front and one back with a large old fireplace on the ground floor. A center box stair winds through the house to all floors. A family account claims the house to have been built in 1694 originally with two stories and the roof sloping back one way against the rocks with another story being added later. Many adjustments have been made, but the house remains essentially that of the early Quaker farmers and millers. Set close to the rocks and adjacent to Rock Spring is The Springhouse. This is a fine old stone construction built around a large rock formation. It is L-shaped in plan with gable end towards the road and a porch extending along this end. On the interior, a walkway of stone runs center, front to back, with a brick floor under the water.

BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

From the intersection of a small road with Rockland Road (1460 feet in north-westerly direction from the intersection of Black Gates Road and Rockland Road) N 70° W, 3060 feet+ to county road 235. Thence N 30° E, 2100 feet+ to county road 232. Thence North 800 feet, thence East 1830 feet, thence South 3660 feet to the place of beginning.



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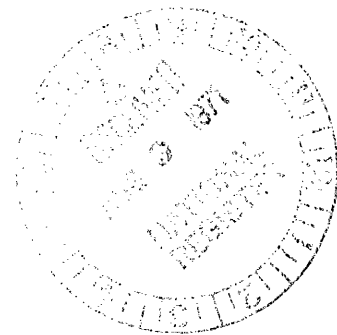
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8. SIGNIFICANCE (cont'd.)

was also true because the fulling mill could not supply a full year's work. All three were present in Rockland in 1733 when Jonathan Strange built his fulling mill. In 1795, Caleb Kirk assumed the operations of the fulling mill and brought with him the saw and grist mills that he had inherited from his father, Adam Kirk. With Samuel Kirk in 1810, he founded the Heshbon Factory, but this soon failed as many textile industries did with competition from Europe, lack of raw materials, and skilled labor.

Sharing the building of the dam and the water rights across the river was William Young. He had come from Scotland in 1784 and moved from his book business in Philadelphia to start the Delaware Paper Co. at Rockland in 1795. When fire destroyed the paper mill in 1814, Young concentrated on producing cotton and woolen goods. As many as 300 people were employed here at the factory's height. But personal debts, floods, and nation-wide problems of textile industries brought failure. Young's son tried to continue, but there was a general decline. The property was sold by the U.S. Marshal in 1849. In 1860, Jessup and Moore took over and revived paper making. Today Concel, Inc., has a large paper plant here. The Young Mansion House on the hill behind was built in 1802 and still stands as an example of an early mill owner's wealth and taste. It has the Delaware Heritage Plaque and is recorded by local surveys of historic buildings. The William Young House represents the early 19th century relation of millowner's proximity to his mills and workers. As the markets grew, many more and unknown investors were called on and the actual owners might not know or participate in the mill. Today, the parent company of the Rockland Concel Mill is in Montreal, the home office in New York, and sister plants as far away as California.



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9. Major Bibliographical References (cont'd.)

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Memorandum of Alfred du Pont, March 7, 1850, "Rockland Manufacturing Company, 1849-1856," I-5-174, Longwood Files, Eleutherian Mills Hagley Library, Wilmington, Delaware.

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9. Major Bibliographical References (cont'd.)

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The following are all research reports of the Eleutherian Mills-Hagley Foundation, Greenville, Delaware.

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Maps

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