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United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service



# National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form*. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional certification comments, entries, and narrative items on continuation sheets if needed (NPS Form 10-900a).

### 1. Name of Property

historic name Stehli Silk Mill

other names/site number N/A

### 2. Location

street & number 701 Martha Avenue

N/A not for publication

city or town Manheim Township, Lancaster City

N/A vicinity

state Pennsylvania code PA county Lancaster code 071 zip code 17601

### 3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended,  
I hereby certify that this X nomination \_\_\_ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60.

In my opinion, the property X meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

X national \_\_\_ statewide \_\_\_ local

*Andrea McDonald*

March 10, 2014  
Date

PA Historical and Museum Commission  
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property \_\_\_ meets \_\_\_ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government \_\_\_\_\_

### 4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register \_\_\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register

\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register \_\_\_ removed from the National Register

\_\_\_ other (explain:) \_\_\_\_\_

*Patrick Andrews*

4/29/2014

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**5. Classification**

**Ownership of Property**  
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

**Category of Property**  
(Check only one box.)

**Number of Resources within Property**  
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Contributing	Noncontributing	
6	1	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
7	1	<b>Total</b>

**Name of related multiple property listing**  
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

N/A

0

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

**Current Functions**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Industry/Processing/Extraction  
Manufacturing Facility

Vacant/Not in use

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

**Materials**  
(Enter categories from instructions.)

No style

foundation: STONE-Granite, CONCRETE  
walls: BRICK  
roof: ASPHALT, STONE-Slate  
other:

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### Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current physical appearance of the property. Explain contributing and noncontributing resources if necessary. Begin with a **summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, setting, size, and significant features.)

#### Summary Paragraph

The Stehli Silk Mill is a historic textile manufacturing complex that was initially established in 1897, evolving from a small group of three individual, sequential buildings to a factory complex of six buildings and one structure by 1933. The buildings are located on a 10-acre polygonal parcel between a residential neighborhood and an industrial railroad corridor in Manheim Township at the northern edge of the City of Lancaster. The property is accessed from two entrances located at the southern and northern ends of Martha Avenue along the northwest property line. Two small-scale entrance piers, which are considered uncounted landscape features, and large deciduous trees are located along the southern property line near the railroad tracks. The rectangular masonry mill buildings are modest in size, being only three stories in height, with stone foundations, brick masonry façades, and timber and steel frame structural support systems that represent vernacular interpretations of early twentieth century industrial architecture. The detailing of these buildings is expressed in their brick pilasters and corbelling and terra-cotta coping, with regularly spaced windows and clerestories for additional lighting. It is unknown who the architects and builders for these buildings and their numerous additions were. The mill complex is in fair condition and retains its integrity.

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### Narrative Description

The Stehli Silk Mill complex extends 883 feet along Martha Avenue on the north and west and is bounded by the railroad line to the south, and adjacent industrial parcels to the east and north. The complex is primarily located in the Rossmere neighborhood in Manheim Township, with the southwestern end of the property being in the City of Lancaster. The property is located in a setting historically comprised of industrial and working-class housing.

The facility is oriented toward Martha Avenue, with Mill No. 1<sup>1</sup> being constructed at the bend in the road of Martha Avenue and then extending westerly down Martha Avenue to Mill Nos. 2 and 3. The remaining buildings within the complex are oriented toward the south elevation (rear) of Mill No. 2. The property is accessed from an asphalt driveway between Mill No. 3 and the adjacent industrial property. The driveway winds around the nonhistoric metal clad building that is located between Mill No. 6 and Mill No. 3, and behind Mill Nos. 5 and 6, and then empties into a grassy lawn between Mill Nos. 1, 2, and 5, which contains several mature, deciduous trees. Stone piers frame the entrance into Mill No. 20 and are located within the property boundary but outside of the chain-link fence that surrounds the resources. Attached to these main buildings are concrete loading docks and platforms in various stages of repair.

The complex grew from a central core of three brick masonry buildings – Mill Nos. 1, 2, and 3 – that were constructed between 1897 and 1902, and then expanded c. 1910, 1914, and 1925 to include five main weaving mill buildings, and their additions – a Ladies' Dining Room, a heating plant, a transformer, various garages, and two unknown buildings. The three independent mill buildings are each three stories tall and are constructed to appear as a single, long, rectangular building. By 1914, the complex had grown to six buildings, including two additional weaving mills, Mill No. 4, and Mill Nos. 5 and 6; and boiler house buildings, which included Nos. 6A, 7, 7A, and 7B. Mill No. 4 was a square, single-story building with a sawtooth roof that was constructed sometime between 1912 and 1915. Mill Nos. 5 and 6 were

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<sup>1</sup> The numbering system used for the different resources and additions within the complex is based on the numbering used on the 1950 Sanborn Map of the property shown in Figure 8.

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also three-story rectangular buildings, with Mill No. 5 being constructed adjacent to Mill No. 4, and Mill No. 6 constructed perpendicular to Mill No. 5.

By 1925, the remainder of the buildings had been constructed. These additional buildings were smaller, brick masonry additions that were attached to the boiler house (Nos. 8, 8A, 10, 11, 12, 13, 13A, 18, and 18A). Additional miscellaneous buildings that were located around the property included: additions to Buildings 9, 10, and 28, which were attached to Mill No. 4; garages (Building Nos. 23, 24, 25A, 25B, 25C, and 29); transformer Building 19; and unknown Buildings 26 and 27. These miscellaneous buildings were all one-story frame and masonry buildings.

The Stehli Silk Mill includes six contributing buildings consisting of four weaving mill buildings, the Ladies' Dining Room, and the boiler house; one non-contributing warehouse building (c. 2000); and one contributing structure, the smokestack. Of primary importance are Mill Nos. 1, 2, and 3, which present an imposing presence along Martha Avenue. Each of these mill buildings is considered a separate building, as individually, they each have their own staircase and fire door. The north elevation of Mill Nos. 1, 2, and 3 are dominated by three-story, brick masonry walls with 120 regular bays of brick pilasters and segmental arched wood windows. Perpendicular to Mill No. 2, and separate and behind is the T-shaped Mill Nos. 5 and 6, which is also a three-story, brick masonry building with metal industrial sash. The interiors of all of these mill buildings reflect their industrial heritage with long, open manufacturing spaces and natural lighting. Visible at the bend in Martha Avenue is the Ladies' Dining Room that is comprised of Building Nos. 20 and 21; and a one-story, brick building with an addition that has paired wood windows, brick parapets, and detailing, with terra-cotta coping against the backdrop of the west elevation of Mill No. 1. The interior is a large open space with central clerestory. The last building is the boiler house, which is comprised of Nos. 6A, 7, 7A, 7B, 10, 11, 12, 13, 13a, 15, and 16.

Characteristic of industrial architecture, the Stehli Silk Mill's architectural style is expressed primarily through its pilasters and window details, which are common in early industrial buildings. In the early buildings, the verticality of the pilasters sets up a rhythm along the street (see Photographs 1 and 2). In the later buildings, the horizontality of their construction and use of the metal sash form a ribbon down the building. This rhythm is reinforced by the use of opaque glazing in the top two rows of glazing and the yellow-tinted glazing in the fourth and fifth rows from the top (see Photographs 7 and 8).

The buildings are constructed of brick masonry on stone foundations and the floors are supported by structural wood columns with wood and steel beams. Most of the roofs are flat or are shallow-pitched gable roofs with ridgelines parallel to Martha Avenue. Several buildings have clerestories with metal, divided light sash. The interiors of these buildings are typical of the industrial complexes of the period, with painted brick exterior walls, unfinished wood floors, and painted beam ceilings. Mill Nos. 1, 2, and 3 have wood columns spaced 7 feet on center, with Mill No. 5 having columns spaced 9 feet on center. All of the buildings have open floor plans with a central or regularly spaced column line in order to allow the maximum amount of space available for use. Access between the buildings is through metal fire doors.

The Stehli family and mill management were concerned with the appearance of their property; attractive lawns with multicolored flowers and well-trimmed shrubbery adjoined the buildings.<sup>2</sup> Also located on the property were a mill house and numerous walking paths. Located in the two-and-one-half-acre lot across the street from the mill was a park-like setting with manicured lawns, ornamental plantings, rose pergolas, fish ponds, and a rock garden that were all set

<sup>2</sup> Stehli & Company, Inc. *The Mills of the Stehli Silks Corporation* (Lancaster, PA: Conestoga Publishing Company), unknown date, p. 3.

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behind an alley of deciduous trees (see Figures 1 and 2).<sup>3</sup> Nothing remains of the mill house, ornamental gardens, and plantings today. The mill house was demolished at an unknown time after 1982. Deterioration and lack of maintenance forced the demolition in 2008 of several buildings, which included one of the weaving plants (Mill No. 4), several additions to the heating plant, the transformer building, two unknown buildings, and all of the garages.

The following inventory is based on the sequential numbering system found on Lancaster, Pennsylvania, Sanborn Map No. 106 (see Figure 8).<sup>4</sup> There are several gaps in the numbering system due to buildings and/or additions that were no longer standing, as they were recently demolished because of their deteriorated condition.<sup>5</sup> Alphabetical ordering has been added in the inventory for ease of use with mapping.

### Mill No. 1 (A): Weaving

Mill No. 1 was constructed in 1897 and is a 42 bay long by five bay deep masonry building that has a stone foundation and a concrete water table. This weaving mill is a three-story, brick masonry building that was laid in American bond with eight courses of stretchers and then a header course. Each bay is divisible by plain brick pilasters that are star bolted to the timber frame structural system. Between each of the brick pilasters are 12 over 12, flat-head, double-hung wood sash set within a wood frame in a segmental arched opening. Each window has a concrete sill and a brick, double rowlock lintel that forms the segmental arch lintel above. There are a number of different glazing types within the windows: tinted slightly purple, clear, ribbed, and opaque. Above the third-floor windows is corbelled brick. Above the corbelling are wood rafter tails that extend beyond the top of the pilasters and support the asphalt roof. The building is capped with a shallow-pitched gable roof that is parallel to Martha Avenue.

Starting at the southwest corner and proceeding right to left, an exterior door is located in Bay 42, which is the circulation spine between Mill Nos. 1 and 2. This doorway has a pair of solid doors that have been inserted into a former window opening. Between the head of the door and the segmental arched opening is infilled brick.

The west elevation is four stories in height and five bays wide with the bays divisible by brick pilasters. The raised basement has a stone foundation with three stories of brick masonry above. Mill No. 20 intersects with Mill No. 1 at this level. There are 12 over 12, flat-head, double-hung wood sash set within a segmental arched opening in the center bay (see Photograph 3). The remaining windows in Bays 1, 2, 4, and 5 are all six over six, flat-head, double-hung wood sash set within segmental arched openings. The windows in Bay 1 are offset at the floor level to allow light into the stairwell. The top of each bay terminates with brick corbelling that supports a shallow-pitched roof.

The south elevation is similar to the north elevation in that it is three-stories tall; however, it is 39 bays wide. Starting at the southeast corner and proceeding left to right, Mill No. 21 wraps around the west elevation onto Bays 1 and 2. In the exposed stone foundation, Bays 3 to 5 have been painted white. Bays 6 through 13 have six over six, flat-head, wood

<sup>3</sup> In 1911, Alfred Schneebeel, Superintendent of the mill, began planting flowers around the mill. After talking to a number of workers at various plants, he decided that if the environment in which a man (or woman) worked was pleasant, then he/she would, as a rule, be a happier person. If the working environment was not pleasant, the coarser influence in his life dominated his personality. Schneebeel began to beautify the two and one-half acres. There were broad, level lawns with alternating red and green designs, and flagstone walkways that were bordered with perennials. There were fish ponds, 1,000 roses, and trees all visible from the mill windows. Employees appreciated the care that Schneebeel extended, and they asked him for flower seeds, rose slips, tulip bulbs, and cuttings from the plants around the mill to plant in their own yards. The mill yards, which were open to all employees, were a source of mutual pride. The walls and fences were covered with climbing roses. During World War I, when civilians were relying on war gardens, part of the mill yard was turned over to vegetable cultivation. When the war was over, the gardens gave way to lawns using ordinary plants. Schneebeel also created a rock garden in the parking lot across the street from the mill. The focus was on the waterfall and two concrete pools, the stone of which came from Lebanon, Pennsylvania. This same landscaping theme was carried out at other Stehli plants.

<sup>4</sup> Sanborn Map Company, Map No. 106, for Lancaster, Pennsylvania, 1950.

<sup>5</sup> Mill No. 4, and Building Nos. 8, 8A, 9, 23, 24, 25A, 25B, 25C, 26, 27, 28, 28B, and 29.

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sash set within a wood frame all set within a segmental arched opening. A three-story concrete masonry unit (CMU) shaft is located in Bay 14. These CMU and brick shafts provide freight elevator access between floors and restrooms. An exterior metal fire stair is located in Bays 18 and 19. Bays 37 and 38 have blank brick walls and provide for the boiler house to intersect with Mill No. 1 at Bay 38 (see Photograph 5).

The interior has a wood timber frame structural system that has painted, round, wood columns located 7 feet on center. On top of the columns are cast iron beam seats that support the wood joists. All of the interior masonry walls and ceilings have been painted white, with a contrasting painted wainscoting on the masonry walls. The floors are tongue-and-groove wood flooring.

A wooden staircase with an enclosed wood handrail is located in the southwest corner of the building and extends between the basement and the third floor. Starting at the southeast corner and proceeding right to left, a second wood box stair is located in Bay 42 (see Photograph 14). The stair has metal pipe railings on the exterior masonry walls, and a solid wood balustrade with an additional wood handrail on the interior. Located in the masonry load-bearing walls between Mill Nos. 1 and 2 are square-cased openings on the first floor and segmental arched openings on the second and third floors. Rolling metal fire doors extend across these openings.

#### **Mill No. 2 (B): Weaving**

Mill No. 2 was constructed in 1899 and its design continues the design vocabulary that was used in Mill No. 1. Mill No. 2 is constructed immediately adjacent to Mill No. 1 and is a three-story tall, 37 bay long, brick masonry building that has a stone foundation and a concrete water table. The brick masonry was laid in American bond with eight courses of stretchers and then a header course. The bays are divisible by plain brick pilasters that are star bolted to the timber frame structural system. Between each of the brick pilasters are 12 over 12, flat-head, double-hung wood sash set within a segmental arched opening. Each window has a concrete sill and a brick, double rowlock lintel that forms the segmental arch lintel above. There are a number of different glazing types within the windows: tinted slightly purple, clear, ribbed, and opaque. Above the third-floor windows is corbelled brick. Above the corbelling are wood rafter tails that extend beyond the top of the pilasters and support the asphalt roof. The building is capped with a shallow-pitched gable roof that is parallel to Martha Avenue.

Starting at the southwest corner and proceeding right to left (in order of construction), the main entrance is located in Bays 20 and 21 (see Photograph 19). This one-story, brick masonry entrance has a stepped center parapet with an inset panel over the entrance. There is a pair of six-light, half-panel doors set in a wood frame between five-light sidelights and a 10-light transom. All of the doors, sidelights, and transom are set within a wood frame. Within the brick face are two, single vertical panels with a herringbone pattern in each panel. Above the transom is a soldier lintel. The entrance extends out one bay with blind openings on the side elevations. An additional exterior door is located at the circulation spines located in Bay 1, adjacent to Mill No. 1. This door has a pair of bias cut, beaded board doors with strap hinges set within a wood frame with a six-light transom over the door. There is a single light in the center of the upper third of each door.

There are also four large windows on the second floor of Mill No. 2, one in Bay 1, and then three others in Bays 27 and 28, 30 and 31, and 33 and 34. These openings are infilled with modern aluminum storefronts with stucco panels on the top and side. Beneath the infilled openings are triangular wood and steel structural supports. The original bay windows were severely deteriorated and were deemed a hazard by Manheim Township Building Code officials in 2011.

The south elevation is similar to the north elevation, with the building being 37 bays long. Starting in the southeast corner and proceeding left to right, there are blank brick walls behind the boiler house in Bays 1 through 3. There are brick shafts in Bays 22 and 37. These brick shafts provide freight elevator access between floors and restrooms. The

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shaft in Bay 37 provided a connection to Mill No. 4, which was demolished in 2008 due to its deteriorated condition. In addition, a metal fire stair is located in Bays 34 and 35.

The interior has a wood timber frame structural system that has painted, round, wood columns located 7 feet on center. On top of the columns are cast iron beam seats that support the wood joists. All of the interior masonry walls and ceilings have been painted white, with a contrasting painted wainscoting on the masonry walls. The floors are tongue-and-groove wood flooring. There are segmental arched openings located in the masonry load-bearing walls between each of the three buildings.

A wooden staircase with an enclosed wood balustrade and handrail is located in the southeast corner of the building and extends between the first and the third floor. Located in the masonry load-bearing walls between Mill Nos. 1 and 2 and Mill Nos. 2 and 3 and separating the fire stairs, are square-cased openings on the first floor and segmental arched openings on the second and third floors (see Photograph 13). Rolling metal fire doors extend across these openings.

### **Mill No. 3 (C): Weaving**

Mill No. 3 was constructed in 1902 immediately adjacent to Mill No. 2, and continues the design vocabulary started by Mill Nos. 1 and 2, so that the north elevation of all three buildings appeared as one continuous building along Martha Avenue. Mill No. 3 is a three-story tall, 41 bay long by four bay deep, brick masonry building with a stone foundation and a concrete water table. The brick masonry was laid in American bond with eight courses of stretchers and then a header course. The bays are divisible by plain brick pilasters that are star bolted to the timber frame structural system. Between each of the brick pilasters are 12 over 12, flat-head, double-hung wood sash set within a segmental arched opening. Each window has a concrete sill and a brick, double rowlock lintel that forms the segmental arch lintel above. There are a number of different glazing types within the windows: tinted slightly purple, clear, ribbed, and opaque. Above the third-floor windows is corbelled brick. Above the corbelling are wood rafter tails that extend beyond the top of the pilasters and support the asphalt roof. The building is capped with a shallow-pitched gable roof that is parallel to Martha Avenue.

Starting in the southwest corner and proceeding right to left, an entrance door is located in Bay 1, which has a pair of bias cut, beaded board doors with strap hinges set within a wood frame, with a 12-light transom over the door. Above the entrance are paired four over four, double-hung wood sash.

The east elevation is four bays wide with 12 over 12, flat-head, double-hung wood sash on the first and fourth bays. The center two bays are extended for the additional width of the stair tower and have nine over nine, flat-head, double-hung wood sash on the floor levels and six over six, flat head, double-hung wood sash on the middle landings. The exit door is a pair of bias cut, beaded board doors with strap hinges set within a wood frame, with a 12-light, flat-head transom above the doors set beneath a segmental arch. Above the door are nine over nine, flat-head, double-hung wood sash in a wood frame, set within a segmental arch.

The south elevation is similar to the north elevation in that it is 40 bays long. Starting from the southeast corner and proceeding from left to right, in Bay 1 there is an entrance door that has a pair of bias cut, beaded board doors with strap hinges set within a wood frame, with a 12-light transom over the door. An infilled window is located in Bay 2. A CMU shaft is located in Bay 14. A metal fire stair is located on top of Bays 18 and 19.

The interior has a wood timber frame structural system that has painted, round, wood columns located 7 feet on center. On top of the columns are cast iron beam seats that support the wood joists. All of the interior masonry walls and ceilings have been painted white, with a contrasting painted wainscoting on the masonry walls. The floors are tongue-

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and-groove wood flooring. There are segmental arched openings located in the masonry load-bearing walls between each of the three buildings.

A wooden staircase with an enclosed wood balustrade and handrail is located in the southeast corner of the building and extends between the first and the third floors. Located in the masonry load-bearing walls between Mill Nos. 2 and 3 and separating the fire stairs, are square-cased openings on the first floor and segmental arched openings on the second and third floors. Rolling metal fire doors extend across these openings (see Photograph 9).

#### **Mill Nos. 5 (F) and 6 (G): Weaving**

Sometime c. 1914, Mill Nos. 5 and 6 were constructed so that Mill No. 6 is perpendicular to Mill No. 5. Mill No. 5 is located behind and perpendicular to Mill Nos. 2 and 3. Mill No. 5 is a 31 bay long by five bay wide, three-story, brick masonry industrial building with a shallow-pitched gable roof. The brick masonry is laid in American bond with seven courses of stretchers and then a header course. The bays are divisible by plain brick pilasters that are star bolted to the timber frame interior construction. Between each of the brick pilasters are 36-light, steel industrial sash set within a concrete sill and metal angle iron above. There are different types of glazing within the industrial sash: the top two bands have opaque glazing and rows four and five have yellowish glazing (see Photographs 7 and 8). Starting at the northwest corner and proceeding left to right, replacement sash are located in Bays 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6. There is a pair of wood doors in Bay 11, a garage door in Bay 13, and open bays in Bays 28 and 29 (see Photograph 8). In Bay 23 there is a pair of floor-to-ceiling doors on the second and third floors.

The south elevation is five bays wide with 12-light industrial sash in Bays 1 through 4. The fifth bay is blind. A pair of six-light, half-panel metal fire doors is located in the fourth bay from the southwest corner. Above each door is a nine-light metal transom.

The east elevation is 27 bays long. The bays are divisible by plain brick pilasters that are star bolted to the timber frame interior construction. Between each of the brick pilasters are 36-light, steel industrial sash set within a concrete sill and metal angle iron above. There are different types of glazing within the industrial sash: the top two bands have opaque glazing and rows four and five have yellowish glazing (see Photographs 7 and 8). From the southeast corner and proceeding left to right, the industrial sash have been removed in Bay 9. A first-floor connection is provided to the metal warehouse in Bay 19. The former connection to Mill No. 4 is provided in Bay 27. There is evidence of painted brick on the first floor.

The north elevation is divided roughly in half vertically with a blank brick wall that provided a former connection to Mill No. 4 on the east half. There is evidence of painted brick on the first and second floors. The west half of the north elevation is three bays wide with 36-light, steel industrial sash set within a concrete sill and metal angle iron above.

Mill No. 5 is supported on the interior with painted, square, wood columns, 9 feet on center, with a steel-bolted beam seat. In the center of the building is a painted brick masonry freight elevator. Stair towers are located on the north and south elevations. The exterior masonry walls and wood ceiling deck are painted. The tongue-and-groove wood floor shows signs of deterioration, with several plywood patches on the third floor. At the intersection of Mill No. 6, there is no masonry wall so that the work space flows without interruption between the two spaces.

Mill No. 6 is located perpendicular to Mill No. 5 on its east elevation. Mill No. 6 is a 27 bay long, three-story, brick masonry industrial building with a shallow-pitched gable roof. The brick masonry is laid in American bond with seven courses of stretchers and then a header course. The bays are divisible by plain brick pilasters that are star bolted to the steel frame interior construction. Between each of the brick pilasters are 36-light, steel industrial sash set within a concrete sill and metal angle iron above. The top two bands of the industrial sash have opaque glazing. These industrial



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sash are in a severely deteriorated condition, with a large number of the lights either broken or missing and the awning windows wracked. Above the third-floor windows in Mill No. 6 is corbelled brick. A two-story concrete frame is attached to the first and second floors of Bays 17 and 18.

The east elevation of Mill No. 6 is four bays wide, with blind bays in the first and fourth bays, and 36-light, steel industrial sash set within a concrete sill and metal angle iron above in the center two bays. There is a pair of metal fire doors in the third bay from the southeast corner.

The north elevation of Mill No. 6 is similar to the south elevation with bays that are divisible by plain brick pilasters that are star bolted to the steel frame interior construction. Between each of the brick pilasters are 36-light, steel industrial sash set within a concrete sill and metal angle iron above. A metal roll-down door is located on the first floor of Bays 11 and 12. A metal man-door is located on the first floor of Bay 16.

The interior of Mill No. 6 is similar to Mill No. 5, with painted exterior masonry walls and wood ceiling deck overtop of steel beams that span between the masonry walls. There is tongue-and-groove wood flooring. At the intersection of Mill No. 5, there is no masonry wall so that the work space flows into Mill No. 6 without interruption between the two spaces.

#### **Mill Nos. 20 (D) and 21 (E): Dining Room**

Sometime in the mid-1920s, Mill No. 20 was constructed on the west elevation of Mill No. 1 as a connector between Mill No. 1 and Mill No. 21, which is perpendicular to Building No. 1 and intersects at its stair tower. Mill Nos. 20 and 21 were constructed as one-story, industrial masonry buildings with Art Deco detailing and were used as a connector and as a dining room for the complex (see Photograph 3).

Mill No. 20 is three bays wide, with the central bay having an oversized entrance. This entrance has a pair of six-light, half-panel wood doors set in a wood frame between divided-light sidelights and a divided-light transom, and all set within a segmental arch with concrete label stops. The windows located on either side of the door are nine over nine, flat-head, double-hung wood sash set within a segmental arched opening with concrete sill and concrete label stops at the end of the segmental arches. Behind the entrance on the main part of the addition is brick parapet with a flat terra-cotta coping on top.

Mill No. 21 is a five bay long by four bay wide, one-story building with raised parapets at the three corners. Each of the three corners has a segmental curve that is covered with a terra-cotta coping. The brick masonry was laid in American bond with six courses of stretchers and then a header course. Within the brick parapet are round brick circles with chevron brickwork within the circle. The west elevation has five bays of paired windows. All of the windows are eight over twelve, double-hung wood sash set in a segmental arched wood frame with a fixed, eight-light transom. The windows all have a concrete sill and concrete label stops at the end of the segmental arches. On the west elevation, two windows in the fourth bay from the southwest corner were replaced at an unknown time by a garage door that has a concrete ramp. The south elevation has paired windows in the first and fourth bays and single windows in the central two bays. The east elevation is also five bays wide with a modern metal door in the fourth bay from the northeast corner. The fifth bay only has a single window. There is physical evidence of painted masonry and flashing tar line at the transom level that indicates an addition or adjacent building was removed as part of the 2008 demolition. This demolished building/addition wrapped around onto Mill No. 1. The windows in Mill No. 21 are in fair condition with muntins missing or deteriorated, meeting rails missing or loose, and glazing missing or broken. Some of the lower sashes have been covered with plywood.

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The shallow-pitched roof is supported by metal Warren roof trusses. A nine bay long clerestory extends from north to south (see Photograph 18). Each bay has eight divided lights set within a metal sash. The glazing is set on top of a beaded board wood wall and supports a painted, wood-beamed roof.

The interior has a concrete floor and painted walls (see Photograph 17). A pair of painted metal doors provides access into Mill No. 20. The transom above the door has been infilled at an unknown time with unpainted CMU. The adjacent window has also been infilled at an unknown time with unpainted CMU.

#### **Boiler House:**

The boiler house is comprised of 11 historically interconnected sections, which are constructed onto the south elevation of Mill No. 2. It may have initially started with No. 6A with the remaining sections constructed as additions to No. 6A. It is unknown when each of these sections was constructed and what each of them was used for as the Sanborn Map Company was not allowed on-site to determine specifics within each section. As a whole, the boiler house is in fair condition, with a number of windows being open to the elements.

The Boiler House includes the following sections: 6A, 7, 7A, 7B, 10, 11, 12, 13, 13A, 15, and 16.

#### *No. 6A (K): Boiler House*

The boiler house was constructed c. 1910<sup>6</sup> and is a one-and-one-half-story, red brick masonry building with a slate gable roof. Brick corbelling is located at the eave's edge and wraps around the gable end on the west elevation and around to the north elevation. There is a segmental arched opening, possibly for a door, and a nine over nine, flat-head, double-hung wood sash set within a segmental arched opening; both are located on the north elevation. Part of the north elevation has been painted, and there is evidence of eave flashing and toeing-in from joists for an addition that had been removed as part of the 2008 demolition. The west elevation has two small additions: Nos. 15 and 16 and the smokestack. Within the west gable end is a 21-divided-light, ocular window. No. 6A extends one bay beyond the smokestack. Within this extension is a six over six, flat-head, double-hung wood sash set within a segmental arched opening and an opening for a segmental arched door. The south elevation has a partially painted masonry wall and two openings: a 12 over 12, double-hung wood sash and a cased opening.

The slate gable roof is supported by a modified Warren roof truss. The slate roof has a six bay long clerestory that is topped with a hipped slate roof. Each window bay in the clerestory is comprised of nine divided lights set between wood mullions.

The interior of No. 6A is a large open space with painted masonry walls (see Photograph 11). Various pendent lights are hanging from the wood decking. Portions of the roof decking have been replaced during the 2008 demolition, as evidenced by unpainted decking.

#### *Nos. 7, 7A, and 7B*

Nos. 7, 7A, and 7B are consecutive, interconnected sections that are connected to Mill No. 2 via a three-story, brick shaft, and were constructed c. 1910. No. 7 is a one-story, brick industrial addition with two openings on the west elevation. The first opening is a wide segmental arch that is open to the elements. The second opening is immediately adjacent and is a large square opening with an angle iron lintel. There is brick corbelling immediately below the eaves. The masonry around the square opening has been painted. No. 7 (H) is covered with a gable roof that is perpendicular to the adjacent brick shaft. This connector is covered with a slate gable

<sup>6</sup> The outline of No. 6A is found on Map No. 98 for Lancaster, Pennsylvania, from the Sanborn Map Company, 1912.

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roof that has a four-bay long, gable clerestory on top. The interior of No. 7 has painted masonry, exposed ceiling joists that are painted, and a concrete floor. It is unknown what these sections were used for, but it may have been used for mechanical purposes due to its proximity to the main boiler.

Located between No. 7 and No. 6A is No. 7A. This one-story addition is covered with a gable roof that is perpendicular to the roof of No. 7. On the top of No. 7A's gable roof is a three bay long gable clerestory. The interior of No. 7A has painted masonry, exposed ceiling joists, and a concrete floor. It is unknown what this addition was used for.

Immediately behind No. 7A and also adjacent to No. 6A is No. 7B. No. 7B is a one-story, masonry addition with a large square opening on the south elevation that is uncovered and open to the elements. The interior has painted masonry, exposed ceiling joists, and a concrete floor. It is unknown what this section was used for.

*No. 10 (L)*

Constructed c. 1910 and prior to 1912, No. 10 is a two-story connector between Nos. 7, 11, and 12, and is immediately connected to the three-story, brick shaft of Mill No. 2 (see Photograph 10). There is a large opening on the first floor and a quadripartite, six over six, double-hung wood sash on the second floor. The interior has painted brick masonry and a concrete floor. It is unknown what this section was used for, but it may have been used for mechanical purposes due to its proximity to the main boiler.

*No. 11 (M)*

Constructed c. 1910 and prior to 1912, No. 11 is a five bay wide, two-story brick masonry addition that is interconnected between Nos. 10 and 12. Two bays are located behind No. 12, and three bays are visible with brick pilasters. Between each pilaster are 12 over 12, flat-head, double-hung wood sash set within a segmental arched opening with brick corbelling above the second-floor windows at the roof parapet's edge. The east and north elevations are covered with vegetation. The interior has painted masonry and a mixture of wood and concrete flooring. It is unknown what this addition was used for, but it may have been used for mechanical purposes due to its proximity to the main boiler.

*No. 12 (N)*

Constructed c. 1910 and prior to 1912, No. 12 is a four bay long by two bay wide, two-story, brick masonry addition that is interconnected with Nos. 10, 11, and 7A. Between Nos. 12 and 13 is an open corridor that is accessed through a pair of six-light, half-panel wood doors with strap hinges. A corrugated metal roof covers this corridor. No. 12 has a stepped parapet that is located at the western end and does not have a parapet at the eastern end. The bays are divisible by the 12 over 12, flat-head, double-hung wood sash set within a segmental arched opening. The northeast corner is covered with vegetation that obscures one whole bay on the east elevation. The interior has painted masonry walls with wood joists and decking supporting the second floor. The first floor's flooring is concrete and the second floor's flooring is wood tongue-and-groove. It is unknown what this addition was used for, but it may have been used for mechanical purposes due to its proximity to the main boiler.

*Nos. 13 (O) and 13A (P)*

Nos. 13 and 13A are one-story, interconnected brick masonry additions that were constructed between 1915 and 1925. Between Nos. 12 and 13 is an open corridor that is accessed through a pair of six-light, half-panel wood doors with strap hinges. A corrugated metal roof covers this corridor. No. 13 is a three-bay wide, shed-roof-covered, brick masonry addition on a stone foundation with a six-light tripartite transom in the north wall over the large opening into the corridor. The windows in the east elevation are nine over nine, flat-head,

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double-hung wood sash set within a segmental arched opening. This section is covered with a corrugated metal roof (see Photograph 6). The interior has painted masonry walls and a concrete floor.

No. 13A is a four bay wide by two bay deep, brick masonry addition with an opposite sloping shed roof to No. 13. No. 13A's roof is covered with asphalt roofing. The windows on the south and east elevations are all industrial sash with 25 lights in the first bay, an opening with a five-light transom in the second bay, a 25-light sash in the third bay, and a pair of 20-light industrial sash in the fourth bay. On the east elevation there is a pair of 20-light industrial sash in the first bay and a pair of 12-light industrial sash in the second bay. Around the corner on the north elevation is a 12 over 12, double-hung wood sash. On the west elevation is a brick shed roof addition with corbelled brick at the roof's edge. Within the addition is a segmental arched opening with a flat head that may have had a pair of wood doors. The interior of No. 13A has painted masonry walls and a concrete floor. It is unknown what Nos. 13 and 13A were used for, but they may have been used for mechanical purposes due to their proximity to the main boiler.

*No. 15 (Q): Pump House*

Constructed between 1915 and 1925, this one-story addition was added to the west elevation of No. 6A and is adjacent to No. 16. It was used as a pump house. There is an open door with a segmental arched opening on the north elevation and a nine over nine, double-hung wood sash on the west elevation. The shed roof is taller than its neighbor, No. 15. Within the interior, there is a concrete floor and the brick masonry is painted.

*Building No. 16 (R): Oil House*

Constructed between 1915 and 1925, this addition is a one-story, shed roof addition that was added to the west elevation of No. 6A. This addition is located between No. 15 and the smokestack and was used as an oil house. There is a nine over nine, double-hung wood sash on the west elevation and an open doorway on the south elevation that is located in a segmental arched opening with a flat head. Within the interior, there is a concrete floor and the brick masonry is painted.

**Smokestack (S)**

Constructed between 1915 and 1925, based on historic mapping, the smokestack is located on the west elevation of No. 6A (see Photographs 5 and 6). The smokestack is square with dark masonry that appears to have considerable spalling at its base and near the top, showing the red inner courses of brick.

**Warehouse (T)**

Constructed between 1957 and 1971, this warehouse is a two-story, shallow-pitched, metal building that is connected to Mill No. 5 via a one-story metal connector. A rolling fire door separates this metal warehouse building from Mill No. 5. Within the roof are metal ductwork and eight ventilators.

**Conclusion**

In addition to removal of one main building (Mill No. 4 and its additions, Nos. 9, 10, and 28), seven secondary buildings – garages (Nos. 23, 24, 25A, 25B, 25C, and 29), transformer Building 19, unknown Buildings 26 and 27, and boiler house additions (Nos. 8, 8A, 10, 11, 12, 13, 13A, 18, and 18A) – were all removed at the same time in 2008 due to their deteriorated condition. All of these buildings were located behind Mill Nos. 1, 2, and 3, which present an imposing presence along Martha Avenue. The resulting effect is that the complex retains its integrity and would meet all seven aspects of integrity. The complex retains its *location*, as the property is the original location of the manufacturing facility. It retains the cumulative *design* of the remaining major buildings within the complex. While Mill No. 4 and some secondary buildings have been demolished on the property due to their deteriorated condition, the overall *design* of the complex is retained with a continuous ribbon of buildings along Martha Avenue. It retains its original *setting* as it

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is still located in Manheim Township and the City of Lancaster and is partially adjacent to residential housing and the remaining industrial buildings, though these adjacent buildings have been modernized. With the closure of the mill facility in 1954, the new owners did not maintain the ornamental plantings that remained on-site and the lot across the street was sold for revenue. The remaining mill buildings still retain their key exterior *materials* of brick masonry walls with repetitive windows, and in the interior, with unobstructed interior space with wood columns. Its aspect of *workmanship* is evident in its brick masonry detailing, modest floor-to-ceiling heights, segmental brick arches with fire doors between buildings, and ribbons of wood windows and metal industrial sash. It retains its quality of *feeling* of a manufacturing company, with open unobstructed spaces and repetitive window patterns. It does retain its *association* as an industrial facility with long spaces and windows providing light in which to work. Based on the evaluation of these seven aspects of integrity, the Stehli Silk Mill retains its integrity.

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**8. Statement of Significance**

**Applicable National Register Criteria**

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing.)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Industry  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Period of Significance**

1897-1954  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Dates**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Significant Person**

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Cultural Affiliation**

N/A  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Architect/Builder**

Unknown  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Criteria Considerations**

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years.

**Period of Significance (justification)**

The period of significance for the complex is 1897 to 1954, spanning six decades from the mill's initial date of construction to the year the mill closed.

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**Criteria Considerations (explanation, if necessary)**

N/A

**Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph** (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance and applicable criteria.)

The Stehli Silk Mill is nationally significant under Criterion A in the area of Industry for its association with the development of the silk industry in the United States during the first half of the twentieth century. Stehli and Company (Stehli & Co.) became Lancaster County's largest silk manufacturer and employer. It was also one of the country's premier manufacturers of silk dress fabric, with operations in Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina. The Stehli Silk Mill on Martha Avenue in Lancaster County was the core of the company's operations—its first plant in the United States and its primary weaving facility for its high-end line of goods. Its products were used by major clothing manufacturers, and it introduced important design innovations with the premier of its *Americana* line of fabrics in 1925. The company's history charts the trajectory of the twentieth century textile industry in the United States from the construction of this mill to its demise in the 1950s due to the replacement of silk with synthetics, such as rayon and nylon. The period of significance for the complex is 1897 to 1954, spanning six decades from the mill's initial date of construction to the year the mill closed.

**Narrative Statement of Significance** (Provide at least one paragraph for each area of significance.)

*Company History*

Stehli & Co. was a Swiss firm established in 1837 in Obfelden, Switzerland, in a weaving mill that initially produced cotton and wool fabric, but soon switched to silk.<sup>7</sup> In 1892, Robert Stehli and Max Froelicher—Stehli formed Stehli & Co. to import their fabrics to the United States. Soon after, the 1897 Dingley tariff made the importation of silk fabrics unprofitable, so Stehli decided to establish manufacturing operations in the United States.<sup>8</sup>

Stehli & Co. started its first American plant in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, in 1897, when Robert Stehli, from the parent company in Zurich, Switzerland, and Robert M. Barton of New York, the American correspondent of the firm, closed a deal with the Lancaster Board of Trade to establish a large silk mill in Lancaster, Pennsylvania.<sup>9</sup> Over 20 cities competed for the new mill. As enticements, they were offered free land, free bricks, exemption from taxes, and free use of the railroad. In the end, Stehli decided to build a new plant in Lancaster. A strip of land in the Rossmere neighborhood on Marshall Street, north of the railroad in Manheim Township (with a small corner of the property crossing the Lancaster City border), was acquired through John Hiemens and the Real Estate Improvement Company. The proposed mill was to be 250 feet long and 50 feet deep, and was to employ 500 hands to operate 300 looms. It was expected that when the plans were completed there would be 1,000 looms, which would make this enterprise one of the largest in the country.<sup>10</sup> Construction began on Mill No. 1 on December 1, 1897. The plant was sited so that the firm and the building could grow and eventually house 1,000 looms.

<sup>7</sup> Emile Stehli, *Stehli & Co., Zurich and New York – 100 Years Silk Industry* [sic], typescript translation by Dolores Wenglasz, undated, Lancaster County Historical Society. Title of original: *Zurcherische Seidenwebschule, Dekomposition, I Kurs 1899-1900*.

<sup>8</sup> Duties were imposed on wool and hides, which had been duty-free since 1872. Rates were increased on woolens, linens, silks, silk-cotton blends, china, and sugar. Within a few years, these rates increased again.

<sup>9</sup> "New Industry Established," *The New York Times*, October 23, 1892. The Board of Trade had originally raised a \$50,000 subscription to locate an annex of the Johnson, Cowden and Company (Johnson, Cowden & Co.) of Paterson, New Jersey. But negotiations with Johnson, Cowden & Co. fell through and negotiations began with Stehli & Co.

<sup>10</sup> "The Silk Mill A Go," *The Lancaster Daily Intelligencer*, October 22, 1897, p. 4.

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Weaving of silk fabric began in July 1898 at Stehli & Co. Mill No. 1. By November 1899, 250 looms were in operation. Construction of Mill No. 2 started in 1899, and Mill No. 3 was started in 1902. By December 1901, there were 500 looms. By October 1904, there were 740 looms. Six months later there were 850 looms. Mill No. 4 was constructed in c. 1914, so that by January 1914, there were 1,090 looms. Mill No. 5 was constructed in 1914 and was completed a year later. In 1922, there were 1,100 looms.<sup>11</sup>

Until 1902, the plant at Rossmere was Stehli's only U.S. operation. That year, it erected another weaving mill in High Point, North Carolina. Until 1920, Stehli relied on other manufacturers for supplying silk yarn. In 1920, the company built a throwing mill in Harrisonburg, Virginia. In 1925, it built another throwing mill in Waynesboro, Virginia, and acquired a building for use as a second weaving mill in Manheim Borough, Lancaster County.<sup>12</sup>

Sometime between c. 1910 and 1925, the boiler house complex was begun, consisting of 11 interconnected sections, including Nos. 6A (Boiler House), 7, 7A, 7B, 11, 12, 13, 13A, 15 (pump house), 16 (oil house), 18, and the smokestack. In 1916, the Stehli Silk Mill at Rossmere was claimed to be the second-largest silk weaving facility in the world.<sup>13</sup> In 1925, Mill Nos. 20 and 21 were added to the west elevation of Mill No. 1. Mill No. 20 was a one-story connecter, and No. 21 was the Ladies' Dining Room. Construction of all of the buildings was completed by 1925.<sup>14</sup>

At Stehli & Co., demand was strong enough that night shifts were added by 1914. With the additional shifts, production doubled and business grew, but fell in 1922, and then rose again in 1923, 1924, and 1925. Production peaked in 1927, partially due to the *Americana* prints collection. Stehli held its position as a major employer in both Lancaster County and the state silk industry through the 1930s. It rivaled the Lehigh County Adelaide Mills in the 1920s and generally employed almost double the workers of other Lancaster County silk mills until World War II. Employment at the plant topped out at 1,600 in 1928, but held steady at about 1,000 through the 1930s. It dropped to 750 in 1941, to less than 500 by 1947, and in 1953, the year before the plant closed, employment was only 338.<sup>15</sup>

Stehli weathered the Depression, but following permanent changes in consumer taste and demand, slowly Stehli joined other silk manufacturers in transitioning to synthetics. In the 1930s, Stehli added production of synthetics in its weaving facilities. After World War II, Stehli shifted production completely to synthetics in its southern mill, but continued to produce silks in its Lancaster plant. In 1954, the Stehli & Co. Mill Manager, Eric Burri, sent a letter to all employees stating that "by direction of Mr. H. C. Monroe, President, manufacturing operations at this plant will terminate permanently upon completion of weaving now in process."<sup>16</sup>

In 1955, a year after the mill closed, the Rossmere property was sold to Radio Corporation of America (RCA) and was used in the manufacture of tubes for color televisions.<sup>17</sup> Apparently, the remaining Stehli Lancaster County assets were

<sup>11</sup> Mill No. 4 was demolished in 2008 due to its deteriorated condition.

<sup>12</sup> According to the company pamphlet, *The Mills of the Stehli Silks Corporation*, the Manheim mill was "operated in conjunction with the Lancaster mill," although the pamphlet does not indicate what the production relationship was. (Lancaster, PA: Conestoga Publishing Company, unknown date), n.p.

<sup>13</sup> H. Justin Roddy. *Physical and Industrial Geography of Lancaster County, Pennsylvania*. (Lancaster, PA: Press of the New Era Publishing Company, 1916), p. 96. [http://www02.us.archive.org/stream/physicalindust00rodd/physicalindust00rodd\\_divu.txt](http://www02.us.archive.org/stream/physicalindust00rodd/physicalindust00rodd_divu.txt), accessed August 30, 2013.

<sup>14</sup> Stehli, *Stehli & Co.*, pp. 34-38.

<sup>15</sup> The impact of synthetics can be seen in the employment statistics. As silk lost ground and Stehli's employment dropped, other Lancaster mills producing synthetics showed rising employment levels and exceeded Stehli in the late 1940s and 1950s. See the triennial *Industrial Directory of Pennsylvania*, published 1916 through 1959.

<sup>16</sup> Letter to all employees of Stehli & Co., dated April 13, 1954, Lancaster County Historical Society.

<sup>17</sup> *The Sunday News*, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, May 11, 1969, p. 23.



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sold to Schwarzenbach-Huber Company in 1957, and company records related to the operations were destroyed.<sup>18</sup> By 2004, the Rossmere property had been acquired by Conestoga Warehouse Corporation for use as a storage facility. The current owners purchased the property in November 2007.

### *Stehli Mills*

Because the records of the Lancaster operations, and possibly the operations of the other mills, were destroyed, it is unknown how Stehli managed its production processes.<sup>19</sup> The Rossmere plant in Lancaster remained its largest mill, and was considered the largest silk weaving operation in the United States.

High Point, North Carolina: With the start-up of the company in Lancaster, Stehli established a second weaving mill in the United States in High Point, North Carolina, in 1902 to produce broad silk. The High Point mill was expanded through the early twentieth century, with additions completed in 1918. It was the fourth silk mill to be constructed in North Carolina and the first silk mill in High Point.<sup>20</sup>

Harrisonburg, Virginia: In 1902, Stehli & Co. constructed a throwing mill plant in Harrisonburg, Virginia. This mill was a two-story, concrete building that was enlarged in 1925. This plant produced yarns and threads for the Stehli Lancaster mills.

Waynesboro, Virginia: A concrete, one-story throwing mill was constructed in 1925 and was enlarged in 1927. The Waynesboro plant produced yarns and threads for the High Point mill.

Manheim, Pennsylvania: In 1925, a two-story, cement block building was acquired in Manheim, Pennsylvania. The building was used for weaving, but it is unknown what the plant specifically produced or its specific relationship with the Rossmere plant.

### ***Manufacture of Silk*** (see the Glossary for a list of terms related to silk making)

The processing of silk fiber is time consuming and labor intensive. Silk is a natural protein fiber produced by insect larvae to form cocoons and webs. The best known type of silk is obtained from cocoons of the larvae of the mulberry silk moth *Bombyx mori*, reared in captivity (sericulture). Moth eggs are incubated and hatched, and the larvae are fed huge amounts of mulberry leaves.<sup>21</sup> Larvae eat continuously for six weeks, growing to about three inches in length, then they stop eating and change color. At this point, the larva attaches itself to a compartmented frame, twig, tree, or shrub in a rearing house to spin a silk cocoon over a three- to eight-day period (pupating). During this time, the silkworm rotates its body in a figure-eight movement some 300,000 times to construct a cocoon, which is about a kilometer of silk filament, but the amount of usable filament in each cocoon is much less.<sup>22</sup>

The cocoon is treated with hot air, steam, or boiling water to soften the secretions, a substance called sericin, that bind the silk filament together. The silk is then carefully unbound from four to eight cocoons at once to create a single thread. Twenty-five hundred silkworms are required to produce a pound of raw silk. The silk is then sorted by color, size, and quality. Often the sericin was only softened enough to let the cocoons be unwound and to help keep the

<sup>18</sup> Lola S. McKnight, "The Americana Prints: A Collection of Artist-Designed Textiles," SM.A. Thesis, SUNY Fashion Institute of Technology, 1993, p. 6.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> The North Carolina Stehli mill building is still in existence. High Point is now the center for wooden furniture manufacturing in the United States.

<sup>21</sup> Larvae can eat osage orange or lettuce, but mulberry leaves produce the finest silk.

<sup>22</sup> Texere Silk, "Silk Production," [www.texeresilk.com/article/silk\\_making\\_how\\_to\\_make\\_silk](http://www.texeresilk.com/article/silk_making_how_to_make_silk), accessed January 7, 2013. The Congressional Hearings on the silk industry in 1901 included considerable testimony from silk makers regarding the technical aspects of silk making. "The Silk Industry in America, as Represented to the United States Industrial Commission at a Hearing at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York, May 22, 1901." <http://books.google.com>, accessed April 16, 2013. James Chittick, *Silk Manufacturing and Its Problems*. New York: The Barnes Printing Company, 1913.

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filaments from breaking. It was not washed out until after throwing or weaving. The highest quality silk came from unbroken cocoons, called by a variety of terms. Most commonly, silk from unbroken cocoons was called reeled silk and silk from broken cocoons was called spun silk. Silk from broken cocoons produced a rougher thread; Cheney Brothers is credited with developing, in 1855, spinning machinery that could produce a usable thread from waste silk.

The process of creating silk yarn is called throwing. The raw silk is doubled (for hand sewing) and tripled (for machine sewing and weaving) and twisted into strands to increase its strength and resiliency to be used for weaving, knitting, or sewing threads and yarns, then wound onto spools or bobbins. In a silk loom, the warp thread is called organzine and the weft is called tram. For organzine, each single thread is given a few twists per inch (tpi) and is combined with several other single strands and counter twisted hard at 10 to 14 tpi. In the tram, two single threads are doubled with each other with a light twist at 3 to 6 tpi, depending on the intended use; for instance, the tram for crepe fabric (see Glossary) process is twisted up to 80 tpi to make it kick up. The thread is tested for consistent size and any uneven thickness is stretched out. The resulting thread is 500 to 2,500 yards long and is looped into a skein so that each skein is about 50 inches in loop length. The skeins are then dyed, dried, and rewound on the bobbins and spools. (Undyed yarns and threads could also be piece dyed after weaving.)

Dyeing silk and other treatments required care. The process could be highly toxic, depending on the dyes and processes used. Since silk was sold and valued by weight, and since removal of the sericin could reduce the weight of the silk by as much as 30 percent, some makers added weight back, usually in the dyeing process, by adding metallic salts to the dyes. Dyes could include tin, iron, arsenic, antimony, chromium, barium, and lead. Such metals are highly corrosive to the fabric, accounting for the common splitting and shredding seen in silk as it ages. Again, high-quality silk makers avoided the use of metal dyes or other weighting processes, but some colors such as black and red, could not be achieved without the use of metallic dyes.

Silk yarn is then woven into various different types of fabric. With the introduction of the sewing machine and of power looms in the nineteenth century, a stronger silk thread was needed than could be used for hand sewing or hand looms.

### ***Significance***

Stehli ranked in the top tier of silk manufacturers in the nation. The silk industry trade journal, *The American Silk Journal*, and major fashion trade serials, such as *Women's Wear*, *Vogue*, and *Harper's Bazaar*, consistently referred to Stehli, Mallinson's Silks, Schwarzenbach-Huber Company, and Cheney Brothers Company, as the premier silk producers in the country. Most American silk producers of silk fabrics produced mid-range plain weaves and prints for a middle and upper working-class market. Stehli, and its companion producers, also produced quality plain and fancy goods for high-end markets such as fashion houses; custom-made clothiers; and high-end, ready-to-wear shops. All of the premier silk manufacturers prided themselves on the quality of their products, avoiding weighted dyes and using reel silk (from whole cocoons) rather than spun silk (from broken cocoons) on its deluxe products. They all had showrooms in New York City and maintained close ties with the fashion houses of New York and Paris. They all had their own throwing and finishing facilities (rather than relying on commission operations). They marketed directly to their customers, unlike the majority of mills whose products went into job lots for auction. These silk manufacturers all had in-house design centers and actively competed with each other to produce popular seasonal designs. They all pursued vigorous advertising programs that stressed the fashion, quality, and superiority of their products (see Figures 14 - 24). Until the mid-1920s, when it introduced its *Americana* line of prints, Stehli was known for its beautifully finished line of vivid primary colors

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and piece-dyed crepes. Mallinson's and Schwarzenbach-Huber product lines included high-quality labor-intensive fabrics—velvets and velveteens, jacquards, and brocades—for garments and upholsteries.<sup>23</sup>

#### *Americana Prints – 1925 to 1927*

According to historian Regina Lee Blaszczyk, Mallinson and Stehli took the lead in forging “a link between color styling and avant-garde art through innovations in design practice, mass advertising, and public relations.”<sup>24</sup> In the mid-1920s, Stehli seized the lead in the area of innovative design with its *Americana* silks line. Stehli was responding to prevailing discussion in the fashion industry that stressed the importance of homegrown American design in fashion. This discussion had gathered steam during and after the First World War, and included designers, museum curators, artists, and manufacturers. The Paris “Exposition Internationale et Art Décoratifs” in 1925 reinforced ideas about art in industrial design and production. The United States did not formally participate in the exposition, but then-Secretary of Commerce Herbert Hoover took a delegation of manufacturers to attend the exposition, including three silk firms: Cheney Brothers, H. R. Mallinson and Co., and StehliSilks.<sup>25</sup> Following the exposition, Stehli hired Kneeland (“Ruzzie”) Green, who in 1925 “initiated a project to have a collection of fabrics that were a large and stylistically varied group of patterns on American themes.”<sup>26</sup> The designers in the project included illustrators, cartoonists, photographers, and celebrity participants. Altogether they developed 80 designs. The chosen patterns were “startling for the exploration of contemporary images and artistic styles.” Green oversaw the project (and later became the director), which included designs from John Held, Jr. (cartoonist, see Figure 12), Edward Steichen (photographer, see Figures 9 and 10), Clayton Knight (artist, see Figures 10 and 11), Ralph Barton (cartoonist, see Figure 12), Charles Buckle Falls (printmaker, illustrator, and theater designer), Katherine Sturges (illustrator), and Helen Dryden (fashion designer).

The *Americana* prints were issued in three series from 1925 to 1927. The *Americana* line received intensive attention from the trade and popular press, from industry personnel, from educators, and from artists and society leaders. Each series was introduced with a grand media splash, including an exhibit at the Art Center, a New York consortium of seven professional groups that worked to promote the interests of design in industry.<sup>27</sup> *Women's Wear*, in a front-page feature article, announced them to be an important contribution to the entire field of American art. The department store, Lord & Taylor, acquired exclusive rights to the 1925 series.<sup>28</sup> Even local newspapers across the country responded to the introduction of the *Americana* prints. The *Lewiston [ME] Daily Sun* noted that the collection was, “a candid effort to create for American women silk print dresses, which were representative of the American atmosphere and a challenge to traditional French dominance in the textile field.”<sup>29</sup>

Textile design historians consider the *Americana* prints to be a watershed in American fabric design history. Design historian Lesley Jackson calls them

<sup>23</sup> Plain weaves and prints are among the easiest fabrics to produce and depend upon the quality of the fiber and dyes and printing process for the quality of the finished goods. Brocades and plushes are highly labor intensive. Brocades require special looms and time-consuming setup. Plushes, such as velvet, are produced with a double back and must be split by skilled cutters to create the napped fabric. The location of the specific Mallinson factory is unknown.

<sup>24</sup> Regina Lee Blaszczyk, “The Colors of Modernism: Georgia O’Keeffe, Cheney Brothers, and the Relationship between Art and Industry in the 1920s,” in Patricia Johnston, ed., *Seeing High and Low: Representing Social Conflict in American Visual Culture* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2006), p. 234.

<sup>25</sup> See “A Century of Progress – Prints from the Allentown Arts Museum.” StehliSilks was one of the branding logos of the company in the mid-1920s. The company formally changed its name to the StehliSilks Corporation in 1933, but in 1937 the company resumed its original name, Stehli & Co.

<sup>26</sup> “A Century of Progress – Prints from the Allentown Arts Museum.”

<sup>27</sup> Lola S. McKnight, “The Americana Prints: a Collection of Artist-Designed Textiles.” The thesis is organized in three sections: the first section deals with the history and impact of the *Americana* prints; sections two and three consist of biographies of the artists and a catalog of the designs.

<sup>28</sup> “Lord and Taylor Obtain Exclusive Rights to ‘Americana Prints,’” *Women's Wear* (November 18, 1925), p. 14.

<sup>29</sup> “Americana Prints Latest,” *Lewiston Daily Sun*, January 5, 1926, p. 3. Also see Lauren D. Whitley, “Morris DeCamp Crawford and the ‘Designed in America’ Campaign, 1916-1922,” *Textile Society of America Symposium Proceedings*, Paper 215, 1998, pp. 410-17.

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the design sensation of the decade...featuring some of the most avant-garde and outlandish patterns of the day. A consciously nationalistic exercise...the patterns were startling for their daring exploration of contemporary imagery and their radical experimental artistic styles...[P]atterns included *Cheerio* and *It* (the latter a euphemism for sex appeal). Both exploited jumbled typography as the basis for their designs, a sly reference to early Cubist paintings of Picasso and Braque.<sup>30</sup>

Many designs were influenced by photographer Edward Steichen, who claimed credit for the success of the prints by finding inspiration in photographs of everyday things, such as aspirin and cigarettes. While the series included serious themes, such as the edgy "Revolt" by Helen Dryden and Clayton Knight's somber "War Birds" (reproducible images not available), most of the designs were light-hearted and entertaining, with names as hilarious and outlandish as the patterns themselves, such as *Moth Balls and Sugar Cubes* (see Figure 9), *Pegs, Ticker Tape, Thrill* (a reference to Coney Island roller coasters) (see Figure 10), *Rhapsody* (printed in blue, of course, see Figure 12), and *Gentlemen Prefer Blondes* (see Figure 12).<sup>31</sup>

The *Americana* prints dominated silk pattern design in the late 1920s. They also boosted Stehli's sales. In 1929, Stehli Silks sold 14,000,000 yards of silk, enough to make 5,000,000 dresses. Three-fourths of the yardage was sold to dress manufacturers and the remaining went to stores for over-the-counter sales. Annual sales topped \$25,000,000.<sup>32</sup>

#### ***Silk Fabric Production in the United States and Pennsylvania***

The first silk mill was established in the United States in 1810 in Mansfield, Connecticut, followed by mills in Gurleysville, Connecticut (1814), and then in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania (1815). However, silk production in the United States remained a minor industry until mechanical looms were introduced in the 1870s and Japan entered the international market as a supplier of raw silk. Until the 1870s, silk production in the United States also focused on throwing silk threads or yarns and weaving or braiding narrow silks, such as ribbons and trims. Developments in weaving machinery made it possible to weave broad silk on power looms, which were almost universally adopted in U.S. silk making.<sup>33</sup> In the 1890s, tariff protection opened opportunities for the production of all kinds of plain and fancy goods. American consumers became the world's most avid buyers of silk goods. By 1908, it was estimated that the value of silk goods sold in the United States exceeded that of England, France, and Italy combined.<sup>34</sup>

In 1882, there were 382 silk manufacturers in the nation. The total number of manufacturers gradually increased so that by 1900 there were 483 mills, and by 1909 there were 852. New Jersey led the United States with the largest number of operating mills, particularly in Paterson, New Jersey. Paterson, New Jersey (known as "Silk City"), thrived, ostensibly due to its proximity to the fashion center of New York City. Pennsylvania was second, followed by New York, Connecticut, and Massachusetts. In 1919, New Jersey led the nation with 686 mills, followed by Pennsylvania with 373 mills. However, in 1919, Pennsylvania had 25 percent more employees than New Jersey mills and also ranked number one in the total number of looms (37,482). By the end of the 1920s, Pennsylvania had taken the lead from New Jersey

<sup>30</sup> Lesley Jackson, *Twentieth Century Pattern Design: Textile and Wallpaper Pioneers* (New York: Princeton Architectural Press, 2011), p. 63. Both the Allentown Art Museum and the New York Metropolitan Museum of Art have staged exhibitions featuring the *Americana* prints.

<sup>31</sup> The all-time best name for a fabric design was the neck tie silk called "Necking Time" (manufacturers unknown). "Them' and the Silk Trade," The Dreamstress webpage, <http://thedreamstress.com/2010/12/them-and-the-sik-trade>, accessed August 6, 2013.

<sup>32</sup> "Silk," *Time*, September 12, 1932, p. 39. By this time, the U.S. branch of Stehli Silks was four times as large as its Swiss parent.

<sup>33</sup> Hand looms, still prevalent in Europe in the early twentieth century, were almost unknown in the U.S. silk industry. Plain goods in broad silks were basic, unpatterned weaves, such as taffetas, crêpe de chines, broadcloth, etc. Fancy goods in broad silks were fabrics with woven patterns of any sort, with jacquard and velvet being the most luxurious, or with printed designs on plain goods.

<sup>34</sup> Madelyne Shaw, "American Silk from a Marketing Magician: H.R. Mallinson & Co.," in Madelyne Shaw, *American Silk, 1830-1930: Entrepreneurs and Artifacts* (Lubbock, TX: Texas Tech University Press, 2007), p. iv.

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and New York in the manufacture of silk and silk goods (see Table 1). Many of the Pennsylvania silk mills were offshoots of companies in Paterson, New Jersey, which had begun in the late 1880s to seek production locations outside of the labor-expensive and labor-activist Paterson area. They found the child labor laws (12 years minimum working age compared to 16 in surrounding states), wage rates (30 percent to 50 percent below Paterson's rates), and labor supplies of Pennsylvania and West Virginia to be exceedingly attractive (see the 1937 Census Department maps showing the geography of silk making, Figures 22 and 23).<sup>35</sup>

Production and management remained dispersed. Regardless of the location or number of mills, any company with pretensions or aspirations to being a major player in the silk industry maintained corporate headquarters in New York City. Companies with major or original mills in New Jersey seem to have kept the operations headquarters there. Only very small local companies, often with employees numbering only in the dozens, seem to have been locally administered. Specialized production companies, such as Folmer, Clogg & Co., a south-central Pennsylvania regional manufacturer of umbrellas, had their own silk weaving facilities; Folmer, Clogg & Co.'s were in York and Lancaster Counties. Marketing was not a targeted activity. For most run-of-the-mill producers, products went to jobbers who put together large lots of fabric for auction to a variety of makers. Pennsylvania-made silks of average quality were used for umbrellas, coffin linings, assorted industrial screenings, upholsteries, printing, accessories, ready-made clothes and underwear, neckties, and shoes.

Within Pennsylvania, the Philadelphia region had dominated the textile industry, particularly in cottons and woolsens, since before the Civil War. Silk production, being a late-nineteenth-century newcomer, found profitable homes outside the Philadelphia metropolitan region, particularly after the Civil War in the booming Lehigh Valley and the anthracite region, where silk mills offered attractive employment to women and a cheap, tractable labor force for manufacturers. Although the manufacturing census did not note silk mills in Pennsylvania in the 1880 Census, the Cultural Resources Geographic Information System (CRGIS) at the Bureau for Historic Preservation (BHP) has records of 12 silk mills dating from the 1880s (one in York County, four in Lehigh County, three in Northampton County, two in Wayne County, one in Berks County, and one in Blair County). The manufacturing census of 1905 recorded that 35 new silk mills had been established in Pennsylvania since 1900, 22 of which were in the anthracite region.<sup>36</sup> The Lehigh Valley was the heart of Pennsylvania's silk industry, with over 132 mills by 1919. In 1927, one-fourth of Allentown's entire workforce was employed in the silk industry, and the Adelaide mill was the largest single silk employer in the Commonwealth, with over 2,000 employees at the mill.<sup>37</sup> In Lancaster County, which had a strong, diversified small manufacturing economy, the existence of a pool of trainable labor accustomed to manufacturing work and supportive local governments also attracted silk production firms expanding or starting new operations.

<sup>35</sup> In testimony before the United States Industrial Commission in 1901, leaders in silk manufacturing thoroughly discussed the development and operations of the silk industry in the nation. See "The Silk Industry in America, as Represented to the United States Industrial Commission at a Hearing at the Fifth Avenue Hotel, New York, May 22, 1901," available digitally at <http://books.google.com>, accessed April 16, 2013. The wage disparity continued into the twentieth century. In 1907, after Stehli took advantage of the current economic recession to fire 35 International Workers of the World (IWW) organizers, half of the workforce of the mill unsuccessfully struck in sympathy. Although no friend to the strikers, the Lancaster newspaper estimated that wages at Stehli were about 20 percent lower than the industry norm. Stehli broke the strike by tapping the pool of nearly 1,000 silk workers laid off from York County silk mills. See Richard Cullen Rath, "The Wobblies in Lancaster: The 1907 Silk Mill Strike," *Journal of the Lancaster County Historical Society* 93, no. 2 (Easter 1991): pp. 46-55. As bemusing as the thought of Wobblies in conservative Lancaster is, Stehli was also the location of one of labor's possibly most unusual confrontations. In the general textile strike of 1934, Stehli strikers ended up in a clash with out-of-town strike supporters when the local workers jeered at an alleged communist agitator. The workers were then attacked by the out-of-town "flying squadron" of union organizers, resulting in injuries and arrests of the out-of-towners. See John A. Salmond, *The General Textile Strike of 1934: From Maine to Alabama* (Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press, 2002), p. 128.

<sup>36</sup> Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, *Manufactures 1905, Part III Special Reports on Selected Industries* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1908), p. 180.

<sup>37</sup> National Register of Historic Places nomination for Lehigh Valley Silk Mill, prepared by Christine Ussler-Trumbull, 1992, Section 8, p. 3.

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By 1909, the value of silk production was second only to woolens in the Commonwealth's textile industry. The 1909 manufacturing census commented on the rapid development of the industry in Pennsylvania: "The state leads in the throwing of silk. It should be noted that much of the throwing is done on contract for establishments engaged in weaving...If allowance were made for the value of silk thrown on commission, Pennsylvania would take first place in the silk industry as a whole."<sup>38</sup> The 1919 manufacturing census reported that in 1919, Pennsylvania took the lead in value of silk textiles and that silk manufacture "became of primary importance among the many kinds of textiles manufactured within the state."<sup>39</sup>

Silk making was a competitive and risky business, dependent on foreign supplies of fragile raw materials and driven by the vagaries of fashion in production and marketing. Even as overall demand rose, there were unpredicted dramatic slumps in demand once or twice a decade. Silk dress fabrics had a limited shelf life as fashions changed quickly, leaving excess stock worth very little. Changing market tastes were exceedingly important. The 1920s saw the beginning of the decline of the custom clothing market and its replacement with an expanding ready-to-wear, mid-quality market. While all manufacturing sectors were hammered, the Depression decimated luxury manufacturing as demand collapsed and shifted direction. Quality department stores dropped custom-made clothing departments.

Compounding the challenges of the economy and whims of fashion, innovations in synthetic textiles also made serious inroads into the silk industry. Beginning in the 1920s, the textile industry successfully increased production of rayon (known as artificial silk, and as "mother-in-law silk"), from 3 million pounds in 1919 to 33 million pounds in 1929.<sup>40</sup> In 1929, the manufacturing census combined reports for silk and rayon as a single category. Nylon was introduced in 1938 and quickly replaced rayon as artificial silk. In the 1930s, main-stream retailers like Sears and J.C. Penney's boosted demand for inexpensive synthetics. Even design houses began developing popular product lines that could be translated into synthetic products. Although the Commonwealth still had a reported 47,000 wage earners in the silk industry in 1937, much of the silk produced was "artificial silk" – nylon (even Stehli added synthetics to its production line) (see Table 2).

During World War II, silk supplies from Japan were cut off, so western countries were forced to find alternatives/substitutes, and the shift away from silk fibers accelerated. Nylon was the preferred fiber for parachutes and flak vests during World War II. After World War II, silk manufacturers were not able to rebound into lost markets, and many manufacturers closed; new synthetics—Dacron, polyester, and others—were added to the list of textile fibers, replacing not just silk, but increasingly wool and cotton as well. By 1950, the number of operating silk looms had dropped to just 3,000, down from 100,000 in 1930.<sup>41</sup> Taking advantage of cheaper labor and the shift to artificial silk, the manufacturing center for silk and artificial silk production shifted from the northeast to the south; Burlington, North Carolina, became the center of production, until most textile production began its migration to Asia in the 1970s.

<sup>38</sup> Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, *Thirteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1910, Volume X, Manufactures, 1909, Reports by States with Statistics for Principal Cities* (Washington D.C.: GPO, 1912), p. 1,069.

<sup>39</sup> Department of Commerce and Labor, Bureau of the Census, *Fourteenth Census of the United States Taken in the Year 1920, Volume IX, Part 2, Manufactures 1919, Reports for States with Statistics for Principal Cities* (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1928), p. 1,297.

<sup>40</sup> "A Century of Progress – Prints from the Allentown Arts Museum," [www.pbtex.com/html/allentown\\_text.html](http://www.pbtex.com/html/allentown_text.html), accessed December 10, 2012. It should be noted that the American Viscose Company started producing rayon (or viscose, an artificial fiber made from wood), in 1910, which grew in popularity. Pennsylvania and New York took the lead in production of rayon; in 1927, Pennsylvania produced 3.8 million pounds, New York produced about 2 million pounds, and all other states combined produced 1.1 million pounds of rayon fiber. Nylon was the first synthetic fiber, introduced by DuPont in the mid-1930s.

<sup>41</sup> "Cheney Brothers Silk, South Manchester, Connecticut." <http://www.textilehistory.org/CheneyBrothersSilk.html>, accessed April 22, 2013.

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### Comparisons

Tariff protection of the turn of the twentieth century caused a boom in the creation of silk companies. Many silk makers in the United States were corporate offspring of European silk makers who moved into production in the United States as a result of tariff barriers. Stehli, Stunzi, and Schwarzenbach-Huber were all Swiss family operations. American Silk Mills Corporation (American Silk) began in the United States in 1896 as a subsidiary of an Italian family company that was one of the largest traders of silk and silk yarn in the world. But there were numerous companies of domestic origin as well. Cheney Brothers was the largest silk maker in the country and the most well-known. Frank Ix & Sons, Aronsons, and numerous others were all American-owned companies that stayed within family control usually until the challenges of the Depression and postwar globalization forced them out of business.

The premier silk maker of the pre-World War II years was undoubtedly Mallinson's, which combined high-quality production, innovative marketing, and cutting-edge design of a caliber that allowed it to compete in Europe with French silk makers. Mallinson revolutionized silk pattern design in 1916 with its *Mexixe* line of prints, inspired by Aztec and American Indian motifs. Thereafter, through the 1920s, the American Museum of Natural History at the Smithsonian Institution maintained an ongoing collection of Mallinson's fabrics and periodically staged exhibitions. Mallinson's differed from most other silk companies in that it was not created or continued by a single family nor even an experienced silk maker: Hiram Mallinson was a salesman who started out as a cash boy at the Megil Silk Company and rose in the sales ranks until he came to direct sales and much of the design operations; he then bought the company in the early twentieth century. Unfortunately, Mallinson's did not long outlast the death of Hiram Mallinson in the mid-1930s; in less than a decade the company was in receivership.<sup>42</sup>

Cheney Brothers of Connecticut was the oldest and largest silk making operation in the country, having begun in the early nineteenth century, attempting to raise silkworms and produce raw silk. About mid-century, the company introduced highly profitable innovations in machinery to throw stronger silk threads and to spin waste silk into a marketable thread. After losing money making carbines for the Army during the Civil War, Cheney Brothers began producing broad silks after the war and became the world's only producer to carry silk all the way from its raw form to a finished product. The company flourished until the 1930s, producing a wide range of fabrics and trims in a range of qualities. In 1938 it partnered with DuPont and the Army Air Force to develop a new parachute. During the war, Cheney's production lines shifted nearly exclusively to wartime contracts. Cheney Brothers was bought out by J.P. Stevens in 1955, which liquidated most of the company's assets, maintaining only a small production operation.<sup>43</sup>

Little information could be found regarding the Schwarzenbach-Huber Silk Company or Stunzi Sons, Inc., both of which were also major producers of a variety of goods of a lower quality range than Stehli or Mallinson. Both were Swiss firms that entered the country after tariff protection closed their American markets and both maintained central offices and showrooms in New York City. Schwarzenbach-Huber's major mill was located in Hoboken, New Jersey. It purchased a French-owned mill and company housing in Stirling, New Jersey, in 1913, which it then sold off in 1928. The company purchased the Ashley & Bailey Silk Mill in Columbia in 1913, and operated it for an undetermined period of time.<sup>44</sup> It

<sup>42</sup> Shaw, "American Silk from a Marketing Magician: H.R. Mallinson & Co.," pp. 239-48. Also see "Cheney Brothers Silk, South Manchester, Connecticut," <http://www.textilehistory.org/CheneyBrothersSilk.html>, accessed April 22, 2013. Eventually the Mallinson assets were bought out by the American Silk Mills Company. For information on the American Silk Mills Corporation, see <http://www.americansilk.com>, accessed April 24, 2013. The location of Mallinson factories is unknown; Mallinson does not appear to have had factories in Pennsylvania.

<sup>43</sup> After further changes in ownership and continued drops in production, the remnants of the mill closed in 1984. In 1978, the 15-block area of housing and factory known as Cheney Village was listed in the National Register of Historic Places. "Cheney Brothers Historic District," National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form, 1978, prepared by George R. Adams.

<sup>44</sup> [http://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WMDWDA\\_The\\_Ashley\\_Bailey\\_Silk\\_Mill\\_Columbia\\_PA\\_and](http://www.waymarking.com/waymarks/WMDWDA_The_Ashley_Bailey_Silk_Mill_Columbia_PA_and) [http://www.longhillhistory.org/lhh\\_stirling.html](http://www.longhillhistory.org/lhh_stirling.html), both accessed August 30, 2013.

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also had a mill in Blairsville, Indiana County, Pennsylvania. The company operated until 1988.<sup>45</sup> Stunzi Sons was something of a late-comer, beginning U.S. production when it purchased the Steiner & Talcott silk mill in West Reading, Berks County, in 1912.<sup>46</sup> It also acquired a mill in Ephrata in the 1920s.

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<sup>45</sup> The entrance of the Schwarzenbach-Huber offices and showrooms in New York are topped by a unique "silk clock" designed by McKim, Mead & White, incorporating various symbols of silk making and marking the hour by the emergence of the "Queen of Silk". <http://www.flickr.com/photos/wallyg/2587961907/>, accessed August 30, 2013. The company also followed the advertising trends of the 1920s. See <http://www.photographersdirect.com/buyers/stockphoto.asp?imageid=3336208> for an image of an Art Deco ad from 1928.

<sup>46</sup> *The American Silk Journal*, 31 (January 1912), p. 44. <http://books.google.com/books?id=NFhYAAAAYAAJ&pg=RA5-PA44&lpg=RA5-PA44&dq=stunzi+silk&source=bl&ots=PAwN4FAsz1&sig=E7xSylOYK10GB330NpaBT9oZqw4&hl=en&sa=X&ei=VQsmUpKQMYSp2gWQr4HACQ&ved=0CFsQ6AEwBjgK#v=onepage&q=stunzi%20silk&f=false>, accessed August 31, 2013.



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Metropolitan Museum of Art, [http://www.metmuseum.org/collections/search-the-collections?ft=\\*&who=Stehli+Silks+Corporation](http://www.metmuseum.org/collections/search-the-collections?ft=*&who=Stehli+Silks+Corporation).

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**Previous documentation on file (NPS):**

preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67 has been requested)  
 previously listed in the National Register  
 previously determined eligible by the National Register  
 designated a National Historic Landmark  
 recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # \_\_\_\_\_  
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # \_\_\_\_\_

**Primary location of additional data:**

State Historic Preservation Office  
 Other State agency  
 Federal agency  
 Local government  
 University  
 Other

Name of repository: Lancaster County Historical Society and  
Millersville University

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Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): N/A

## 10. Geographical Data

**Acreage of Property** 10.8  
(Do not include previously listed resource acreage.)

### UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

A. Latitude: 40.056500 Longitude: -76.297220	C. Latitude: 40.052170 Longitude: -76.291830
B. Latitude: 40.056520 Longitude: -76.291660	D. Latitude: 40.052080 Longitude: -76.296870

### Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The boundaries for the Stehli Silk Mill are the property boundaries referenced in the legal parcel number 3900356000000. Available at the Lancaster County Courthouse, Lancaster.

### Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The boundary includes all the remaining land and extant resources historically associated with the Stehli Silk Mill. The parcel across Martha Avenue that included the ornamental gardens was sold in 1954 after the mill closed. A concrete masonry unit building housing the Occupational Development Center now occupies the property.

## 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Bonnie Wilkinson Mark  
organization Delta Development Group, Inc. date September 2013  
street & number 2000 Technology Parkway telephone (717) 441-9030  
city or town Mechanicsburg state PA zip code 17050  
e-mail bmark@deltaone.com

### Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15-minute series) indicating the property's location.

A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.

- **Continuation Sheets**

Additional documentation sheets have been included and are numbered 1 through 20.

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- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items.)

**Photographs:**

Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map.

Name of Property: Stehli and Company, Inc.  
City or Vicinity: Manheim Township, Lancaster City  
County: Lancaster State: Pennsylvania  
Photographer: Bonnie Wilkinson Mark  
Date Photographed: November and December 2012, and March 2013

Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1. North elevation looking east from Mill No. 3 to Mill No. 1
2. North elevation looking west from Mill No. 1 to Mill No. 3
3. Northwest elevation of Mill No. 21
4. South elevation of Mill No. 1, Mill No. 2, and Boiler House Complex
5. South elevation of Mill No. 1, looking west to Nos. 6A, 15, 16, and smokestack
6. South elevation looking east to Nos. 13, 13A, and Mill No. 21, with Mill No. 1 (background)
7. West elevation of Mill No. 5
8. Window detail on west elevation of Mill No. 5
9. First-floor interior detail of fire doors in Mill No. 1 looking west
10. First-floor detail of entrance doors on the south elevation of Mill No. 2
11. First-floor interior of No. 6A looking east
12. First-floor interior of Mill No. 2 looking west to Mill No. 3
13. First-floor interior of Mill No. 2 looking east into Mill No. 1
14. Third-floor interior of Mill No. 1 looking down the stairs
15. Third-floor interior of Mill No. 1 looking east
16. First-floor interior of Mill No. 5 looking north
17. First-floor interior of Mill No. 21 looking southwest
18. Interior of Mill No. 21 looking south at the clerestory
19. Main entrance in Mill No. 2
20. North elevation of Warehouse

**Paperwork Reduction Act Statement:** This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460 et seq.).

**Estimated Burden Statement:** Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

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GLOSSARY

**Broadcloth (Silk)** – Silk broadcloth is a soft, lightweight silk with a cotton-like feel. It has a dull luster and has a flat, smooth surface. It holds creases well, and makes excellent tailored dress shirts and light blouses. Very easy to sew, does not show pin marks.

**Canton Crepe Silk** – A soft, silk fabric with a finely crinkled texture, similar to but heavier than Crêpe de Chine. It takes its name from Canton (Guangzhou), a Chinese city.

**Charmeuse Silk** – A satin weave silk with a crepe back (also called crepe backed satin). Fabric is woven with a satin weave, where the warp threads cross over three or more of the backing threads. The front side of the fabric has a satin finish, lustrous and reflective, and the back has a dull finish.

**Crêpe de Chine** – Crêpe de Chine (pronounced “krape dee sheen”), French for “Crepe from China,” is similar to crepe silk, but lighter weight and less textured fabric made with S and Z highly twisted filament yarns alternating in the weft and with a normally twisted filament warp.

**Crepe Fabric** – A fabric characterized by a crinkled, puckered, or pebbly surface with highly twisted yarns in the weft and sometimes in the warp or both. Crepe is usually made with a plain weave. The crinkly texture of this soft and pliable fabric can be smooth or quite rough. The fabric is woven from all of the major fibers, natural or man-made. Surface textures range from fine, flat crepes to pebbled and mossy effects; some surfaces resemble tree bark.

**Crepe Silk** – Silk crepe is a luxurious fabric with a good sheen and a pebbly texture obtained by using high-twist yarns.

**Degumming** – The process of removing natural gum or sericin from raw silk (usually cocoons) by boiling in a soap solution.

**Denier** – Is a unit of measure by which silk yarn is weighted and its fineness calculated. This unit expresses the linear mass density of silk filaments (or man-made fibers and yarns) given by weight/mass in grams per 9,000 meters of material.

**Filature** – An establishment for the production of raw (reeled) silk from cocoons, employing modern techniques, such as steam for heating and power for driving the reels.

**Gauze (Silk)** – Silk gauze is a sheer, thin, open-weave fabric sometimes confused with organza. Organza silk is heavier and crisper. Silk gauze is not used for bandages.

**Jacquard** – A special fabrication in which a pattern is woven directly into the material. A device for weaving such elaborate designs by a machine was invented between 1801 and 1810 by Joseph Marie Jacquard (1752 – 1834). The Jacquard mechanism is attached to a loom and operated by a punched card system that selects individual warp threads. A variety of mechanically operated jacquard machines exist, providing control over 100, 200, 400, or 600 ends. There are also Jacquard systems for knitting machines. Jacquard systems can now be electronically controlled.

**Messaline** – A soft, lightweight silk dress fabric with a satin weave.

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**Noil (Silk)** – Noil (sometimes incorrectly called raw silk) comes from the use of very short fibers (called, appropriately, “silk noils”) to weave the fabric. The short fibers are separated from the long fibers during combing in the fiber preparatory processes before spinning.

**Nylon** – “Nylon” is a generic designation for a family of synthetic polymers known generically as polyamides, first produced on February 28, 1935, by Wallace Carothers at DuPont's research facility at the DuPont Experimental Station. Nylon is one of the most commonly used polymers. Nylon is a thermoplastic, silky material, first used commercially in a nylon-bristled toothbrush (1938), followed more famously by women's stockings (“nylons”, 1940), after being introduced as a fabric at the 1939 New York World's Fair. Nylon is made of repeating units linked by amide bonds and is frequently referred to as *polyamide*.

**Organza Silk** – Organza silk is a sheer, thin, open-weave fabric that is heavier and crisper than silk gauze. It has a smooth, flat finish, is strong and durable, and gets its stiffness from tightly twisted yarns. Often used as the base fabric for embellished fabrics.

**Organzine** – Raw silk yarn used for warp threads in fine fabric.

**Rayon** – Rayon is a manufactured, regenerated cellulose fiber. Because it is produced from naturally occurring polymers, it is neither a truly synthetic fiber nor a natural fiber; it is a semi-synthetic or artificial fiber. Rayon is known by the names *viscose rayon* and *art silk* in the textile industry.

**Reeled Silk Yarn** – Reeled, or filament, silk is the highest quality of yarn and is very white and shiny. Cocoons are inspected and sorted, as only those with a perfect shape can be used for the reeling procedure. Cocoons are soaked in warm water to soften the gummy sericin. The silken strand from a single cocoon is too fine to use alone, so individual filaments of 6 to 20 cocoons are unraveled at the same time, traveling through a very small eye. The softened sericin dries, hardens, and binds the strands together to become one thread the size of a human hair. The majority of reeled silks supply large industrial looms.

**Taffeta** – Taffeta is derived from the Persian word *tafhah*, meaning “to spin.” This material is a thin, glossy silk fabric, either plain-woven or cross-ribbed with cords so fine to appear as plain-woven; made of skein-dyed silk.

**Throwing** – The process that links the production of raw silk with weaving. Individual filaments of degummed silk are so fine that they become separated if not twisted or thrown. Throwing will strengthen silk for weaving, particularly in the preparation of warp yarn, and it will also increase the diameter and denier of a silk yarn, depending on the type and weight of fabric to be woven.

**Tram** – Tram is medium-twisted thread formed by twisting 2 to 3 silk yarns together with low twists of 100 to 150 twists per meter (tpm). It is moderately strong, soft, has a good hand (feel), and is mostly used as weft.

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**Viscose** – Viscose is a solution of cellulose xanthate made by treating a cellulose compound with sodium hydroxide and carbon disulfide. Byproducts include sodium thiocarbonate, sodium carbonate, and sodium sulfide. The viscose solution is used to spin the fiber viscose rayon, or rayon, a soft man-made fiber commonly used in dresses, linings, shirts, shorts, coats, jackets, and other outerwear. Viscose rayon is a fiber made from regenerated wood cellulose and is structurally similar to cotton, which is almost pure cellulose.

**Warp** – In weaving cloth, the warp is the set of lengthwise yarns that are held in tension on a frame or loom. Each individual warp thread in a fabric is called a **warp end** or **end**.

**Weaving** – Weaving is done by intersecting the longitudinal threads (the warp, "that which is thrown across") with the transverse threads (the weft, "that which is woven").

**Weft** – The yarn that is inserted over-and-under the warp threads is called the weft, woof, or filler.



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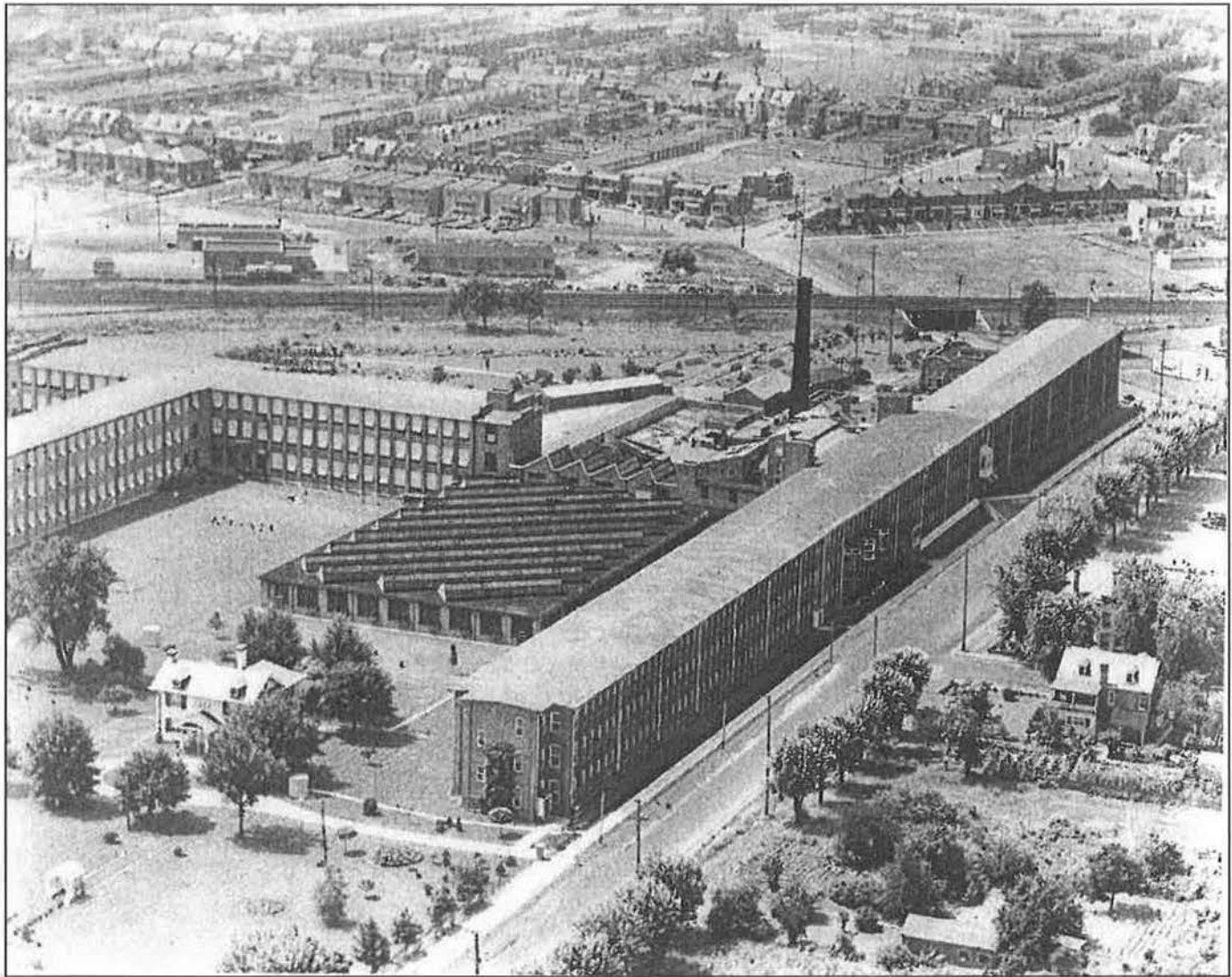


Figure 1: Aerial from Martha Avenue - Lancaster County Historical Society, 1931.

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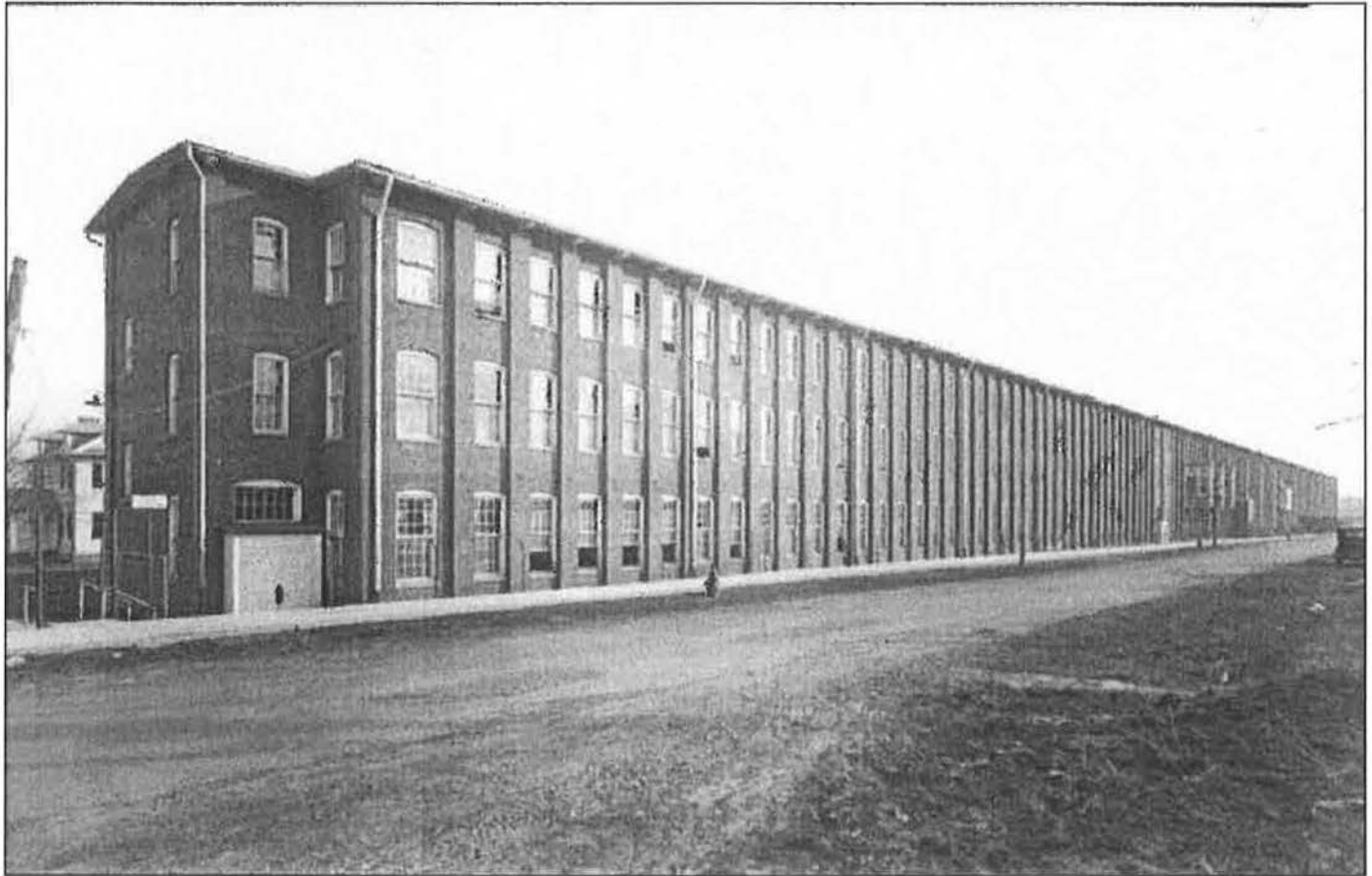


Figure 2: Martha Avenue Facade - Lancaster County Historical Society, 1928.

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Figure 3: Postcard - Lancaster County Historical Society, 1922.

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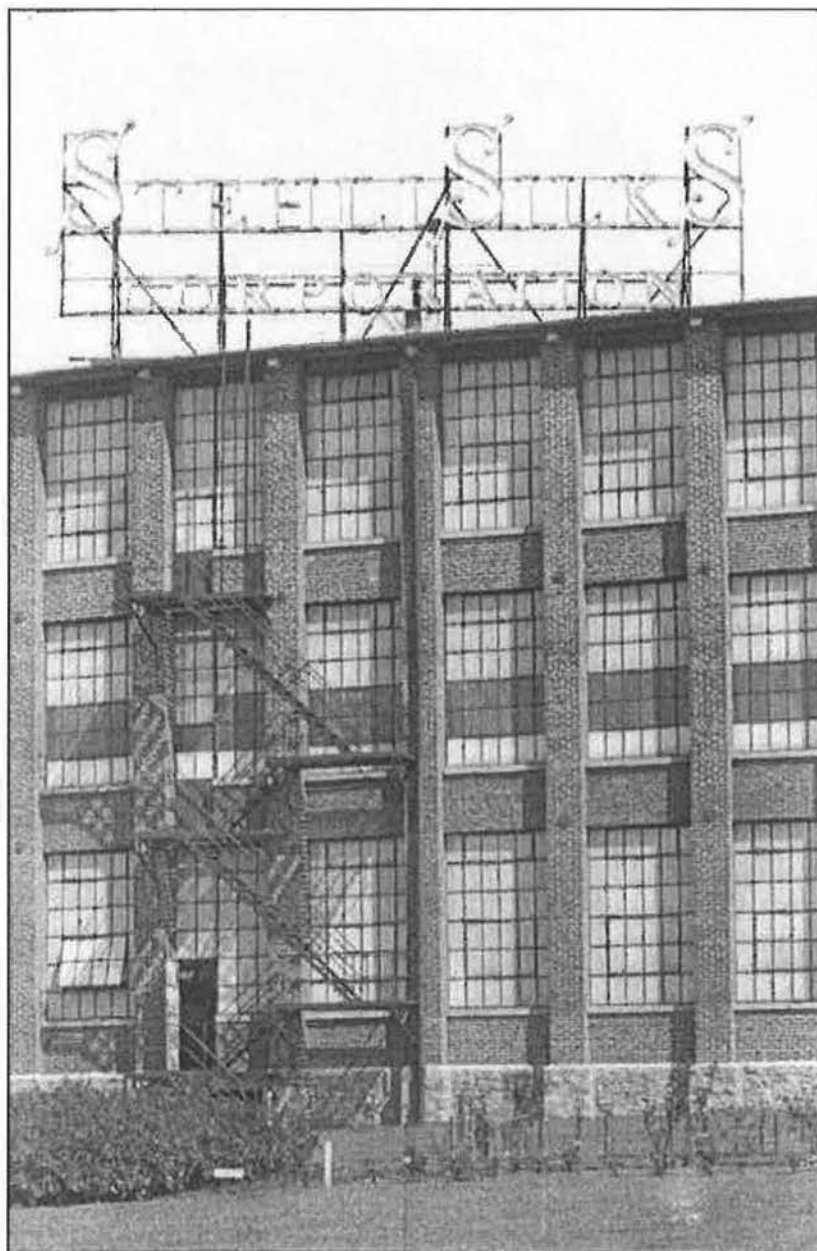


Figure 4: Exterior of Mill No. 5 with Signage - Lancaster County Historical Society, 1921.

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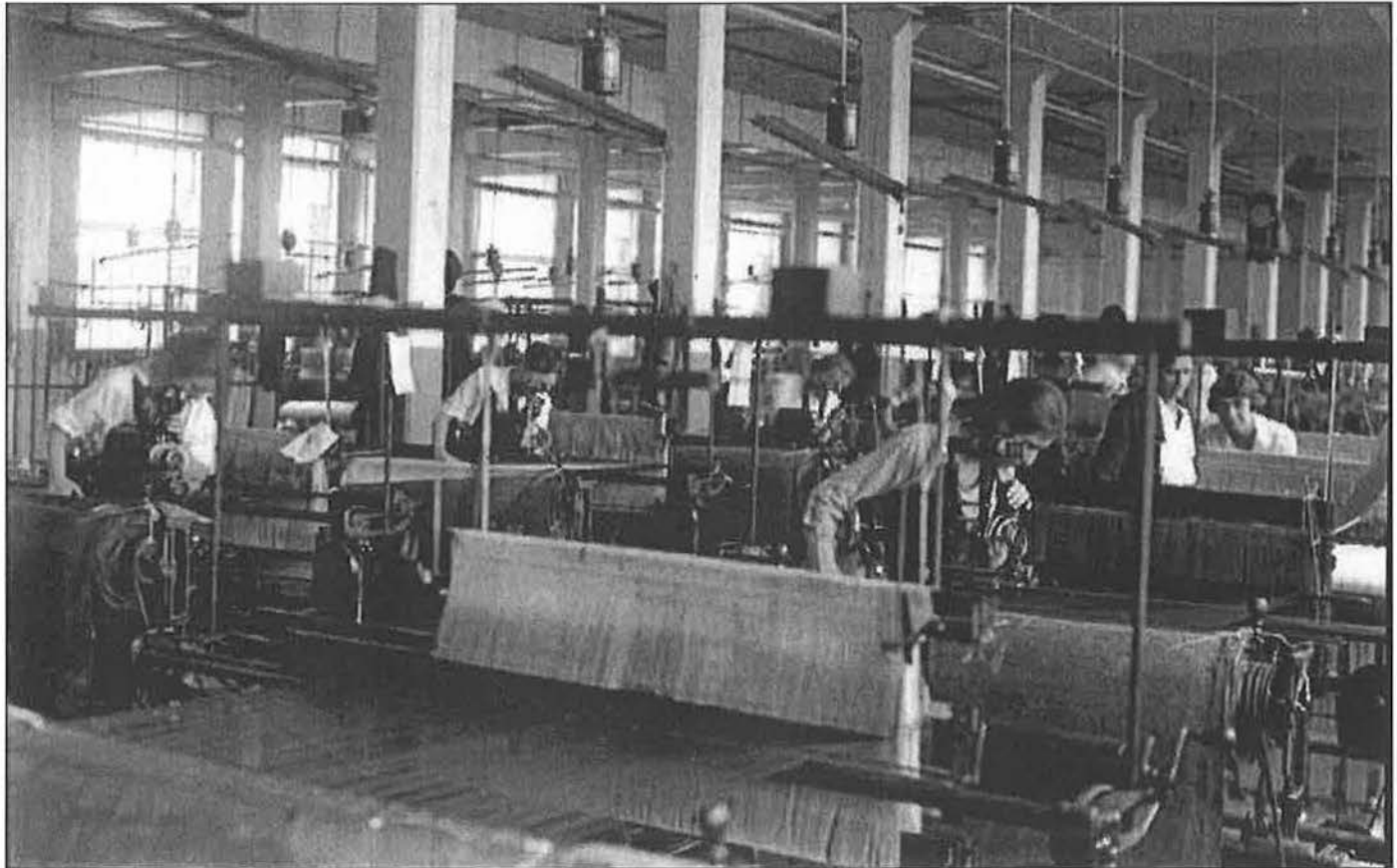


Figure 5: Interior of Mill No. 5 - Lancaster County Historical Society, June 28, 1920.

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Figure 6: Interior of Mill No. 5 - Lancaster County Historical Society, June 28, 1920.

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**Figure 7: Interior of the Ladies Dining Room - *The Mills of the Stehli Silk Corporation*, unknown date.**

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N/A
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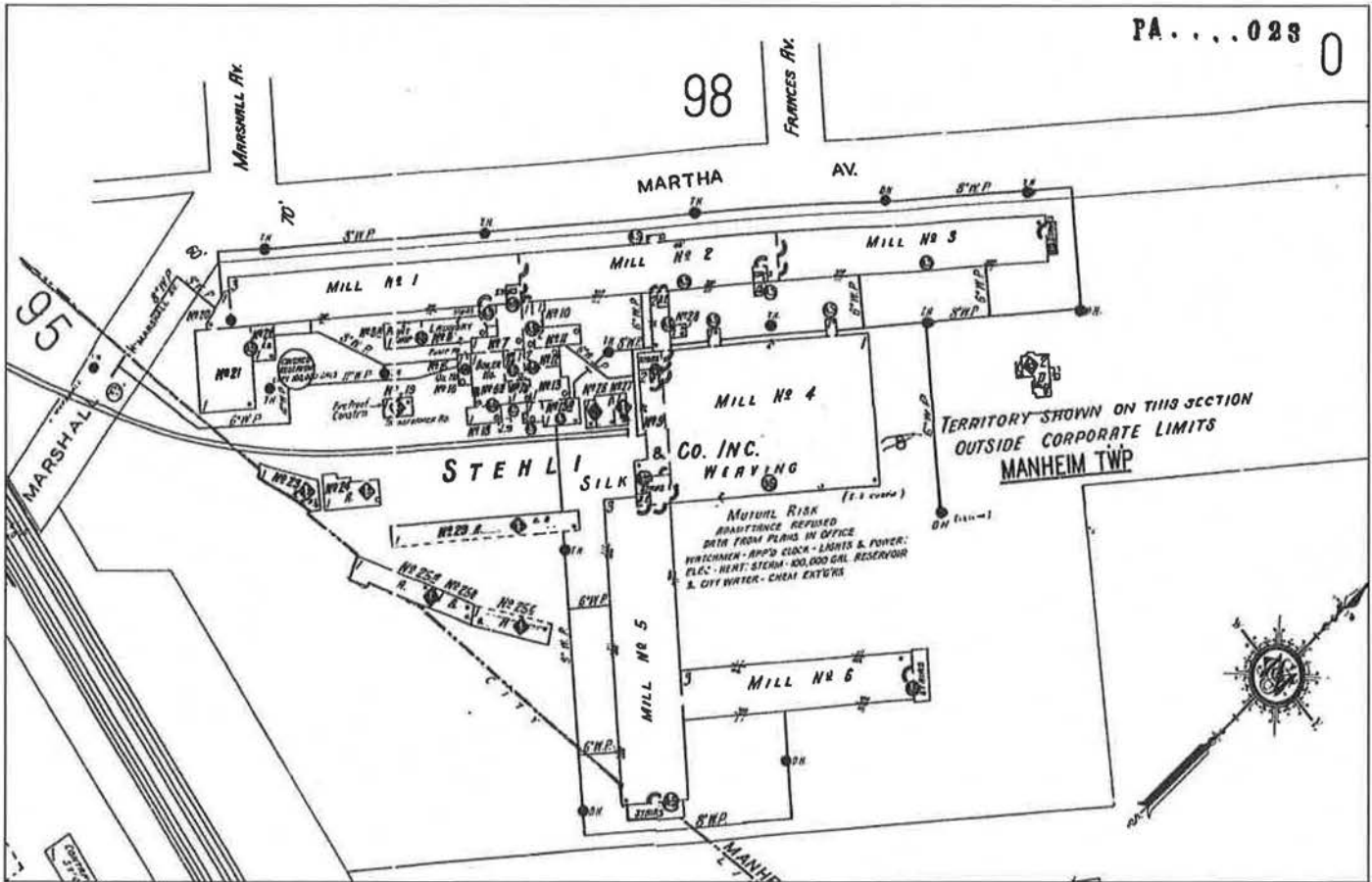


Figure 8: Map of Lancaster, Pennsylvania - Sanborn Map Company, 1950.



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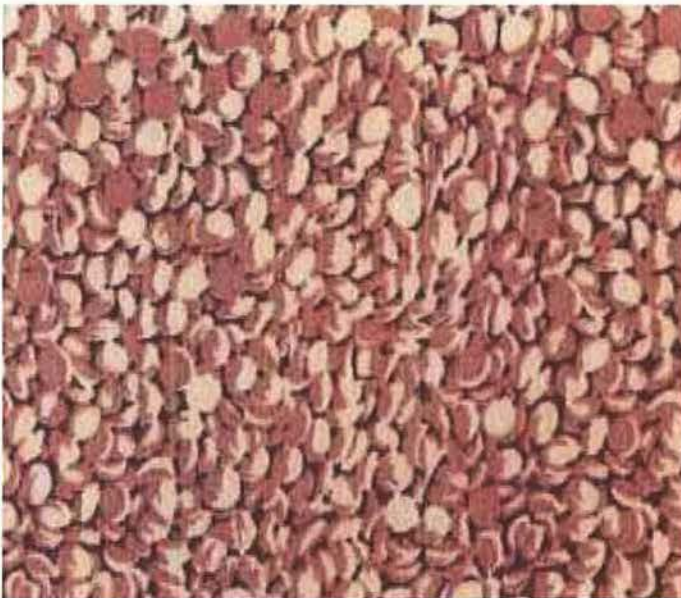
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Illustrations:

The website of the Metropolitan Museum of Art also provides numerous illustrations of Americana prints, but the images are too small to reproduce.



"Moth Balls & Sugar" by Edward Steichen



"Aspirin" by Kneeland (Ruzzie) Green

Figure 9: Americana Print Designs - Twentieth Century Pattern Design

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Figure 10: Americana Print Designs – from Schoesser, *Silk*.

Top: "April" by Clayton Knight; Right: "Buttons and Threads" by Edward Steichen; Bottom: "Thrill" by Dwight Taylor; Left: "It" by Kneeland (Ruzzie) Greene.

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"Manhattan" by Clayton Knight



Dress made using "Manhattan" print

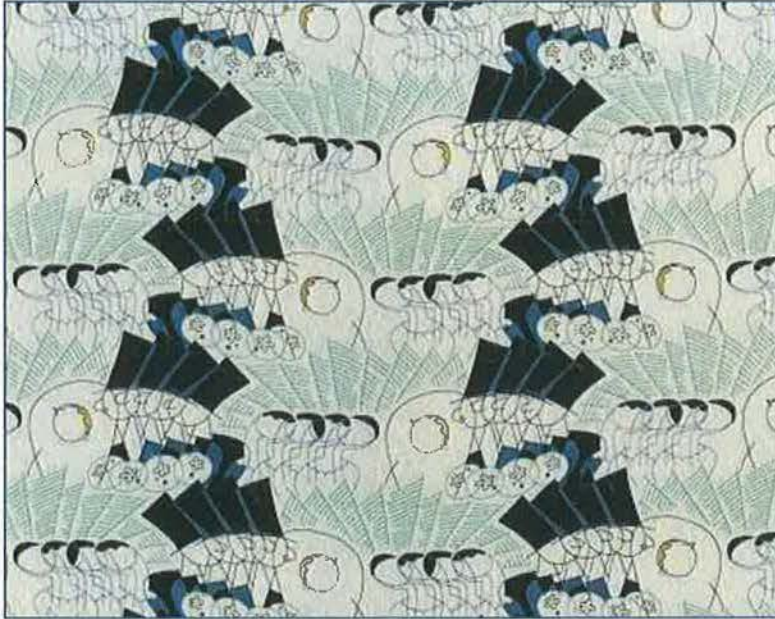
Figure 11: Americana Print Designs, <http://blog.tuppencehapenny.co.uk>.

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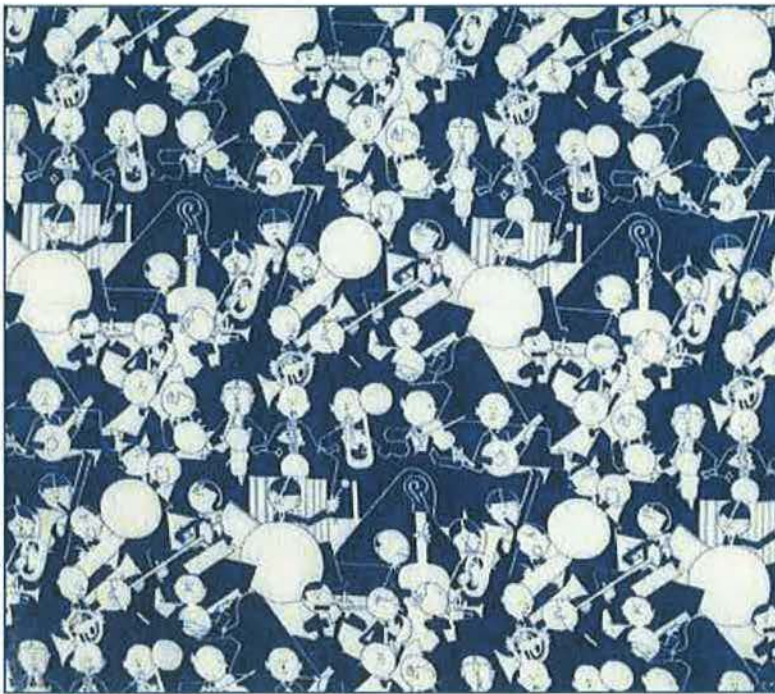
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"Gentlemen Prefer Blondes" by Ralph Barton



"Rhapsody" by John Held

Figure 12: Americana Print Designs, <http://blog.tuppencehapenny.co.uk>.

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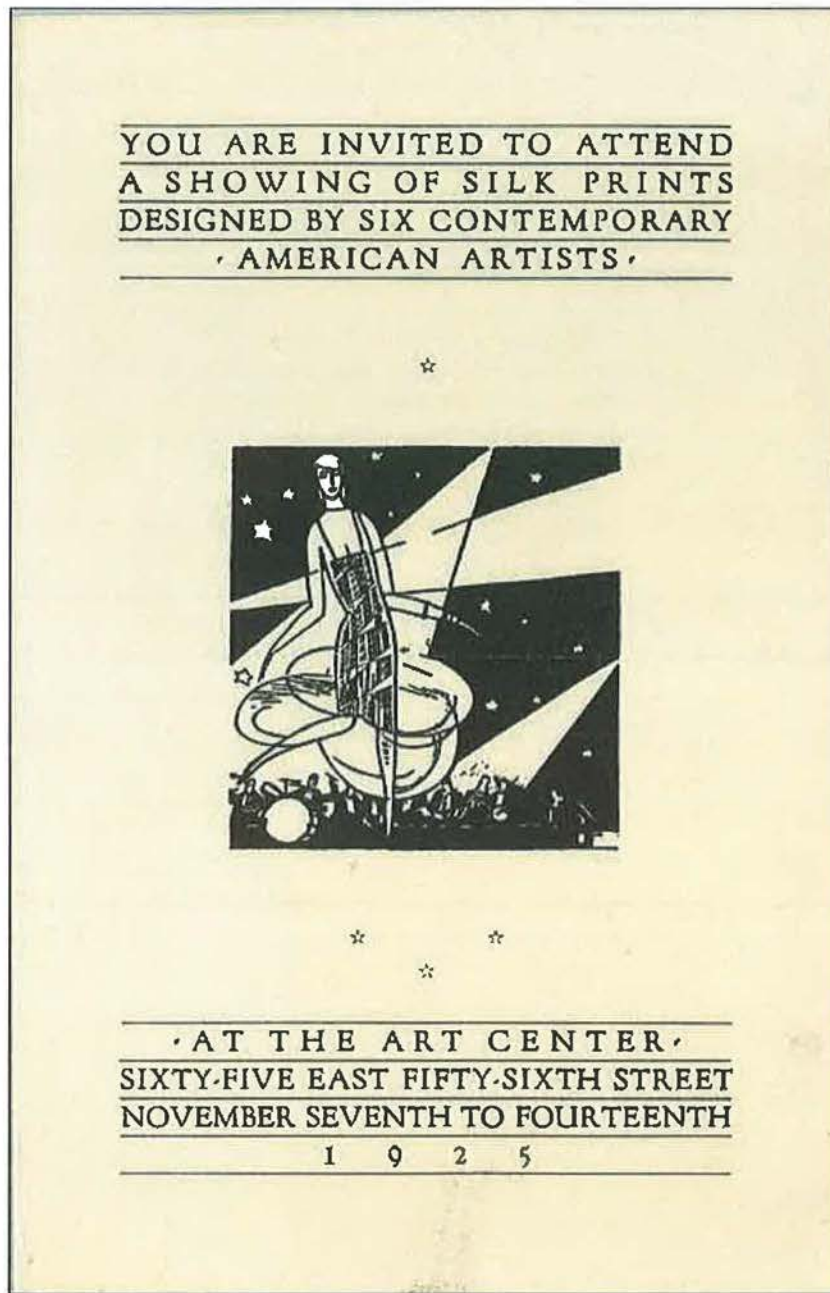


Figure 13: Invitation to Private Exhibition of Stehli Americana Silks, November 6, 1925.

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▲The text on this ad read: "Whether she speaks English, French, Spanish, Italian, or Yankee  
Americaneese . . . her gown proclaims in the very shade and texture of its fabric the worldwide  
preference for Stehli Silk." The favorite fabric of a decade that loved bias cuts and folds,  
nothing would cut and drape like silk.

Figure 14: Advertisement from *Fashions of a Decade: The 1930s*.

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Section number Additional Documentation Page 18

Stehli Silk Mill
Name of Property
Lancaster County
County and State
N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

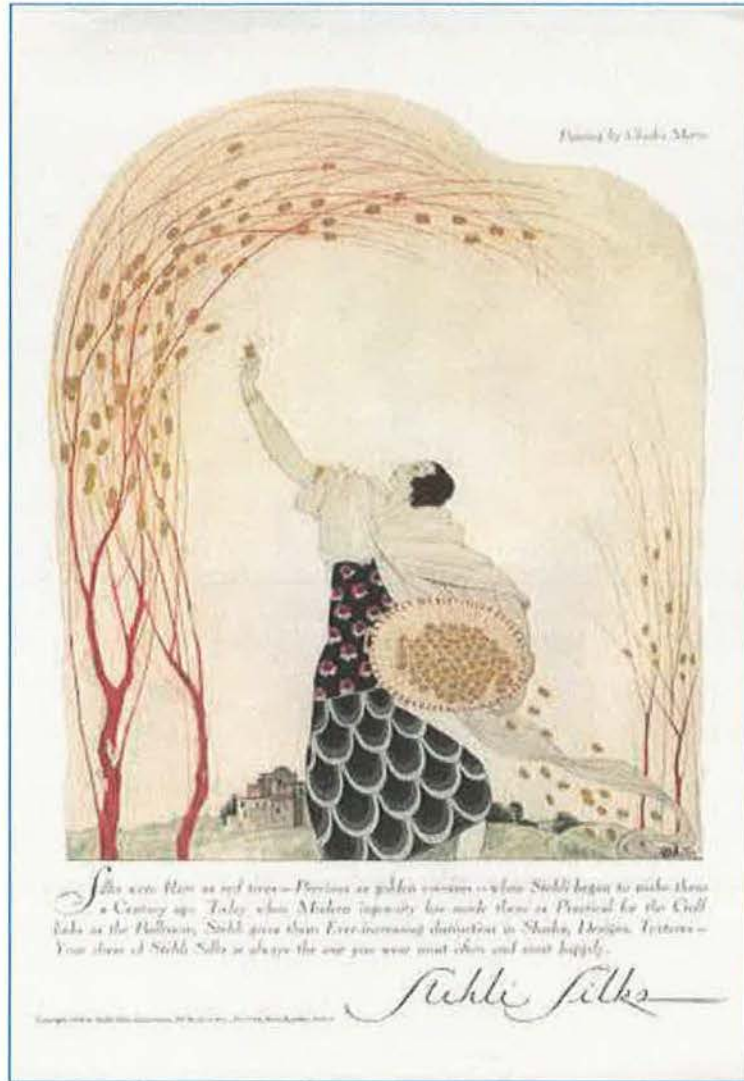


Figure 15: 1928 Magazine Advertisement, [www.ebay.com](http://www.ebay.com).

United States Department of the Interior  
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Section number Additional Documentation Page 19

Stehli Silk Mill

Name of Property


Lancaster County

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

*Now copper-tanned shoulders greet the evening . . .*



Fashion's habit of following the sun has made the pink - and - white complexion as absurd as hating stockings . . . ivory satin skins or bronzo or russet or honey-gold are worn all the year 'round . . . they are flattered into luminous, exotic beauty under evening lights by dresses in the artful tones of Stehli's new "Sunburn Colors" . . . muted shades in the off-white range and others more emphatic, but odd and piquant . . . all of them outrageously becoming to sun-tanned skins.

*Stehli Silks*

Copyright 1929 by Stehli Silk Corporation, 200 Market Avenue, New York - Philadelphia - Chicago

Figure 16: 1929 Magazine Advertisement, [www.flickr.com](http://www.flickr.com).



United States Department of the Interior  
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Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page 20

Stehli Silk Mill
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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

5a

**STEHLI & CO.**

NEW YORK    ZURICH    LONDON    PARIS  
BERLIN            MILAN

104-112 East 25th Street  
Near 4th Avenue  
**NEW YORK**



*MAKERS and DIRECT SELLERS OF*

**Stehli's  
Silk**

**WORLD'S STANDARD**

*FOR ALL TRADES AND PURPOSES.*

<p><b>American Mills</b> LANCASTER, PA. HIGH POINT, N. C.</p>	<p><b>European Mills</b> SWITZERLAND GERMANY ITALY</p>
---	--

Figure 17: Stehli Advertisement, *Silk Manufacturing and Its Problems*, 1913.

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Continuation Sheet

Section number Additional Documentation Page 21

Stehli Silk Mill
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N/A
Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

**A MASTER MERCHANDISING STROKE!**

*For Friday and Saturday Only*

**DRESSES**

*1920 Will Be a Baigner Season for Dresses. The Styles Are Best. They Cost Less Here. SEE THESE DRESSES You'll Be Delighted With the SAVINGS.*

**Dress Sale**

**128 NEW SPRING DRESSES**

*of Genuine "STEHLI" Silk Taffetas, also of Satins, Georgettes, Fine Serges, and high quality Tricotines.*

Figure 18: The Milwaukee Journal, February 22, 1920, <http://news.google.com/newspapers>.

**Stehli Silk**

**Printed Crepes**

**\$2.89**

Stehli print silks, known for their outstanding beauty, fashion and quality, are here ahead of time.

These, you know, are the new spring patterns for dresses, blouses and ensembles. Stehli print silks are extra heavy and for that reason they drape beautifully.

Width, 40 inches, available in a magnificent array of exquisite colors and patterns.

A yard .....\$2.89

**PALACE—THIRD FLOOR.**

Figure 19: Spokane Daily Chronicle, February 10, 1930, <http://news.google.com/newspapers>.

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Section number Additional Documentation Page 22

Stehli Silk Mill

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Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



**Stehli Crepe**

In all the fall shades.  
A beautiful heavy, all silk, suede finish flat crepe. Full 39 inches wide. This is one of the richest, handsomest qualities you will secure in any store, no matter how much you pay! A regular \$2.25 value being offered for this event at

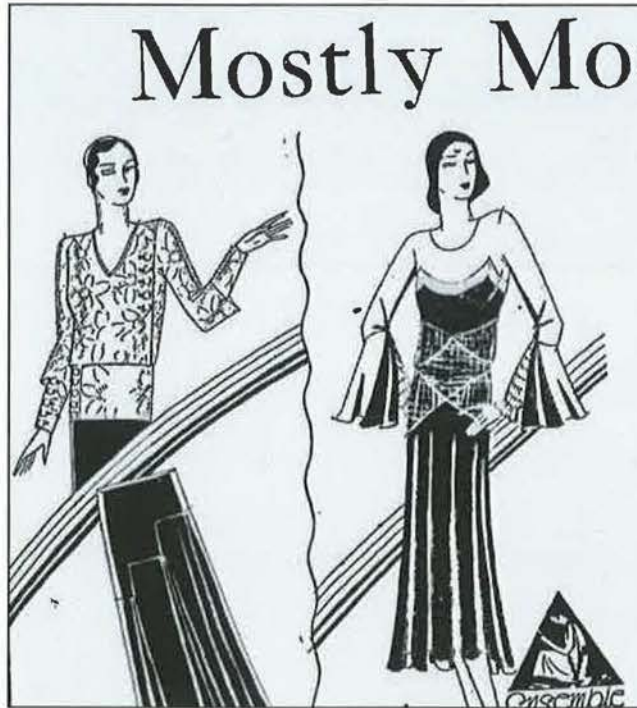
**\$1.59 yd.**

**Belle Ray Crepe**

This is an all Rayon flat crepe constructed of high filament yarns, is soft, drapery, durable and guaran-

Figure 20: St. Petersburg Times, September 25, 1930, <http://news.google.com/newspapers>.

**Mostly Modes**



**"BRIDGE" COLOURS**  
in new Stehli flat crepes

There are both light and dark shades—and all are given names associated with the game of bridge—auction or contract. If you ask for "Opponent," you'll be shown a deep blue. "Contract" is a golden beige. For a "Partner" you are introduced to a lovely tone of suntan.

There are about ten shades to choose from.

The quality of the silk flat crepe is fine and firm—the sort that adapts itself without much urging to the "new silhouette" longer skirt dresses. Ask to see it—38 inches wide, \$2.50 a yard.

—Second Floor, University St.

Figure 21: The Montreal Gazette, November 19, 1929, <http://news.google.com/newspapers>.

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Stehli Silk Mill
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N/A
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**Priced \$9.95 to \$24.00**

Model shown at left depicts the new mode in two piece Dress, long sleeves, high neck. Model shown at right in the one piece model Dress, Eaton effect with plaits.

**NEW SPRING SILKS**

Our Fabric Section presents all that is new in weave and color for Spring and Summer 1936. Tomorrow we open to public view a gorgeous display that will interest dress-makers and all of those who do their own sewing. Fabrics for Spring, whether of wool, cotton or silk are wide and supple. There are prints and bordered effects, sport patterns (twills, and Taffetas, Lustrous Satins in pure silk and Rayon mixtures. Come in and view this important display of Spring's favored fabrics.



**SILKS**

Americana Prints, a wonderful collection of Printed Silks, also noted Cheney Prints, and Stehli Silks; in a wide range of patterns and colorings that are the season's rage.

Also plain Silks of Suede Crepes, Satin Crepes, French Crepes, Satin Superior, Seal Sleek Satin, Canton Crepes, Crepe Alexandra, in dark and Pastel shades.

New line of fancy Percales, fine Gingham, Lingerie Crepes.

**Our January Clearance sale of**

Figure 22: The Owasso Argus-Press (Michigan), February 22, 1926, <http://news.google.com/newspapers>.

**First Showing of  
Mallinson Silk Crepes DeLuxe**

The makers of quality silks . . . of merit silks . . . they have set the standard of pure dye cloths. Superb colorings. **\$1.95**  
Free patterns with each dress length. Yard -----

**STEHLI SILK**

A good range of All Silk Royal Crepes in the pastel shades. **\$1.49**  
In pure silk that bears a famed name. Free patterns. Yard -----

**Beau Monde Figured Silk Seesuckers**

42 inches wide. Guaranteed to wash and guaranteed to wear. **\$1.19 and \$1.69**  
Yard -----



Figure 23: The Southeast Missourian, February 20, 1935, <http://news.google.com/newspapers>.

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Page 24

Stehli Silk Mill

Name of Property

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**Penney's**  
ALWAYS FIRST QUALITY

*creme puff Dacron' crepe*

**predictable perfection for the fashions you make**  
When you sit down to sew Creme Puff you know everything's going to come out right. It drapes, shapes, pleats to perfection. That's just the beginning. Wear it and this luxurious Dacron polyester crepe, made for us by Stehli Silks, stays as beautiful as it looks. Machine wash it, forget your iron. Pack it, forget wrinkles. Colors, softest, prettiest ever to brighten a summer's day. And, on all this perfection you save a pretty penny because it's our alone, 44"/45" wide. Charge it.

**only 1.49 yard solids**  
**1.98 yard prints**

**because it's Penney's own**

the Chelsea color, print	the blinson, solid color
Simplicity pattern #3822	Simplicity pattern #3885
2 yds @ 1.98 ... 3.96	3 1/2 yds @ 1.49 ... 5.21
notions ..... .85	notions ..... .85
pattern ..... .65	pattern ..... .65
total ..... 7.44*	total ..... 6.90*

\*with all items, see us every other day. \*prices in dollars and cents.

Figure 24: Advertisement from *Life*, March 16, 1965.

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Stehli Silk Mill

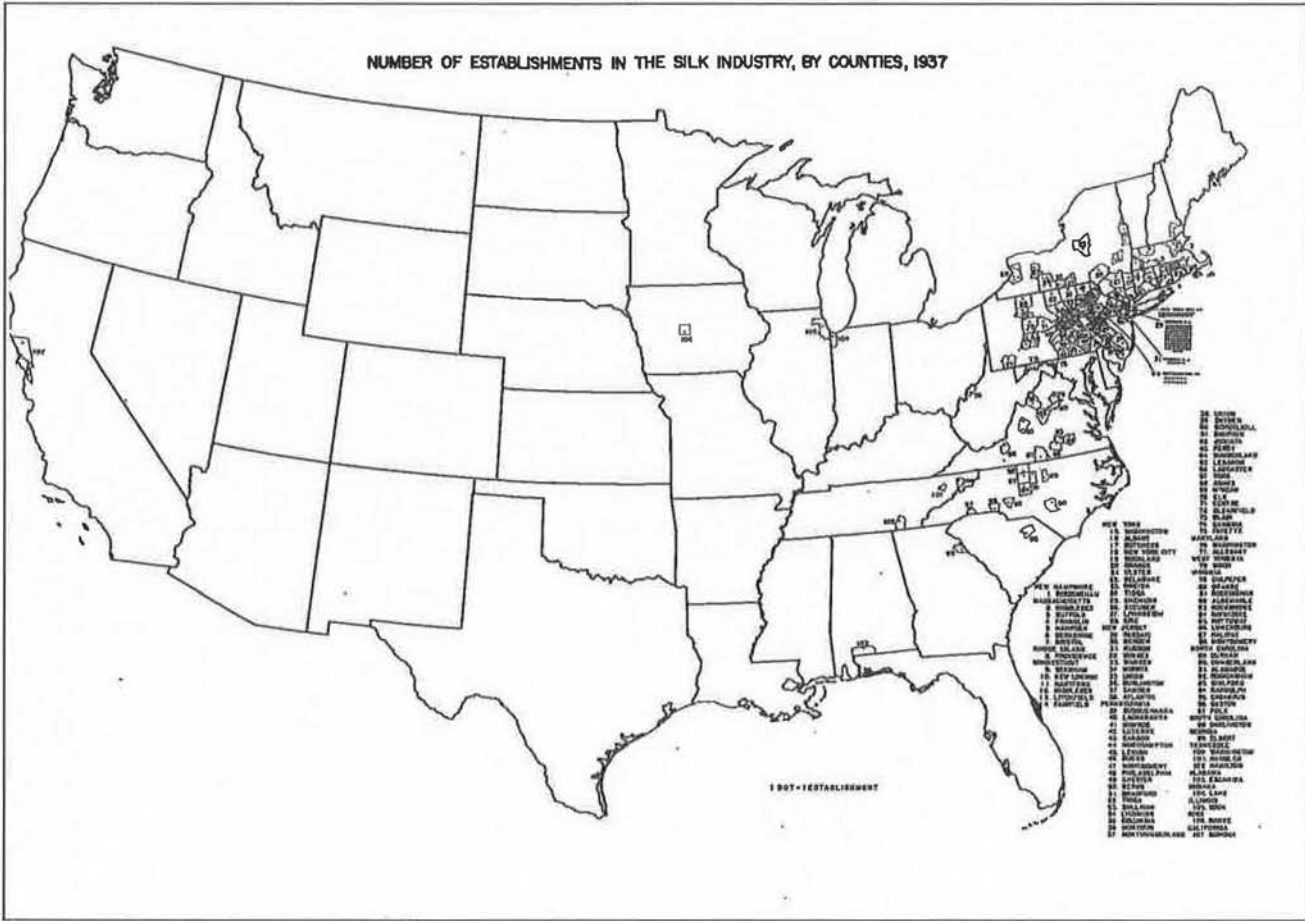
Name of Property

Lancaster County

County and State

N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)



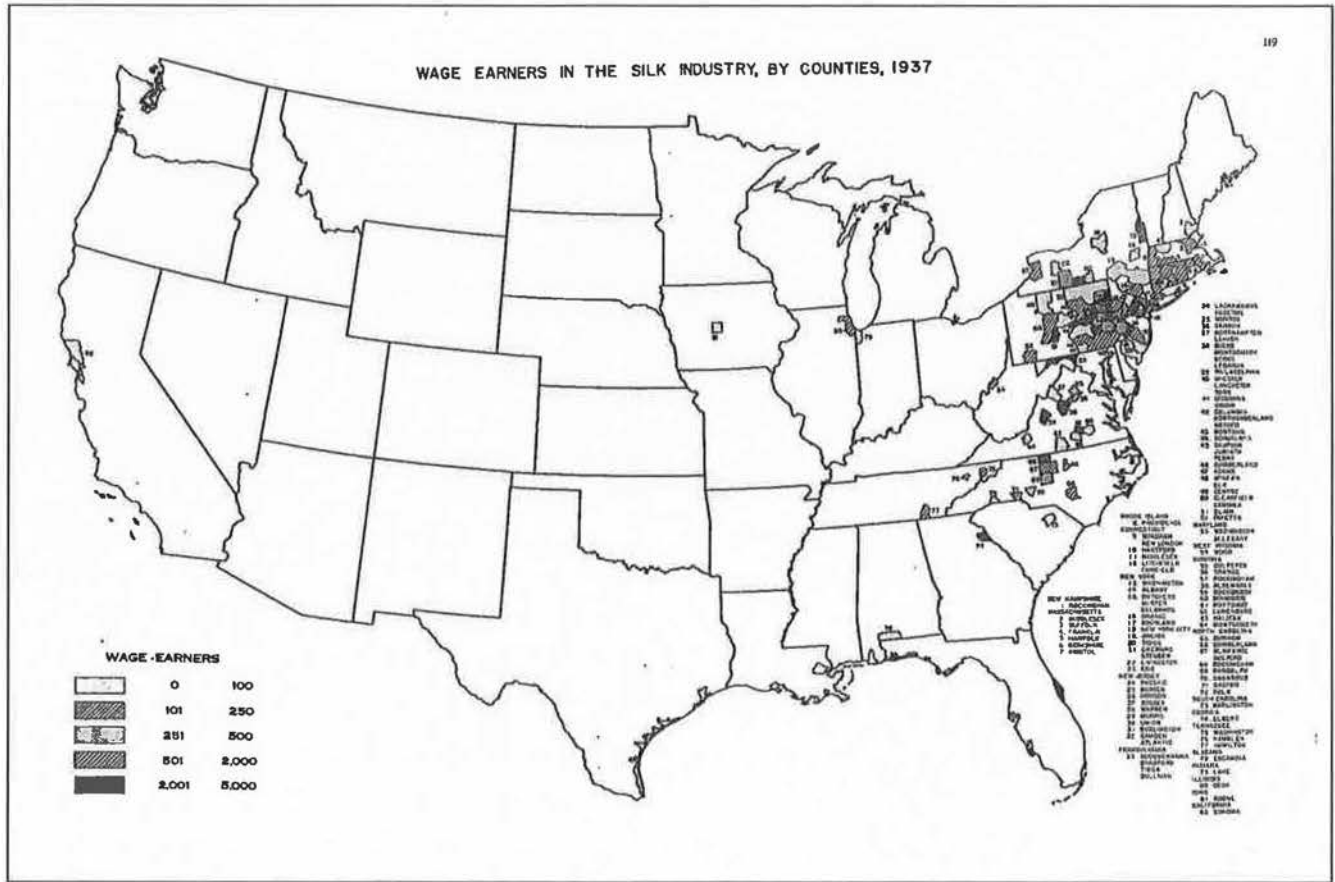
Map 1: Map of the Number of Establishments in the Silk Industry, By Counties, 1937, *Maps of Selected Industries Reported at the Census of Manufactures, 1937.*

United States Department of the Interior  
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Stehli Silk Mill
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Map 2: Map of Wage Earners In the Silk Industry, By Counties, 1937, Maps of Selected Industries Reported at the Census of Manufactures, 1937.

**United States Department of the Interior  
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Continuation Sheet**

Stehli Silk Mill

Name of Property

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N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

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	1927	1925	1923
<b>Broad silks (square yards)</b>			
U.S.	512,826,739	483,115,974	376,221,689
New Jersey	126,643,054	124,628,645	103,848,754
New York	47,854,607	52,634,431	33,948,096
Pennsylvania	225,031,020	25,026,811	161,150,356
<b>All-silk (square yards)</b>			
U.S.	385,530,739	384,725,258	271,819,629
New Jersey	99,810,496	108,288,744	84,560,836
New York	40,730,566	40,000,223	28,967,647
Pennsylvania	171,579,151	168,294,138	116,255,640
<b>Silk-mixed (square yards)</b>			
U.S.	127,296,292	98,390,716	104,402,060
New Jersey	26,832,558	16,349,901	19,287,918
New York	7,124,041	13,364,118	4,980,449
Pennsylvania	53,461,523	38,846,626	44,894,716

**Table 1:** Silk Products in the United States 1923-1927, *Biennial Census of Manufactures*, 1927, Table 4.



**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
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Stehli Silk Mill

Name of Property

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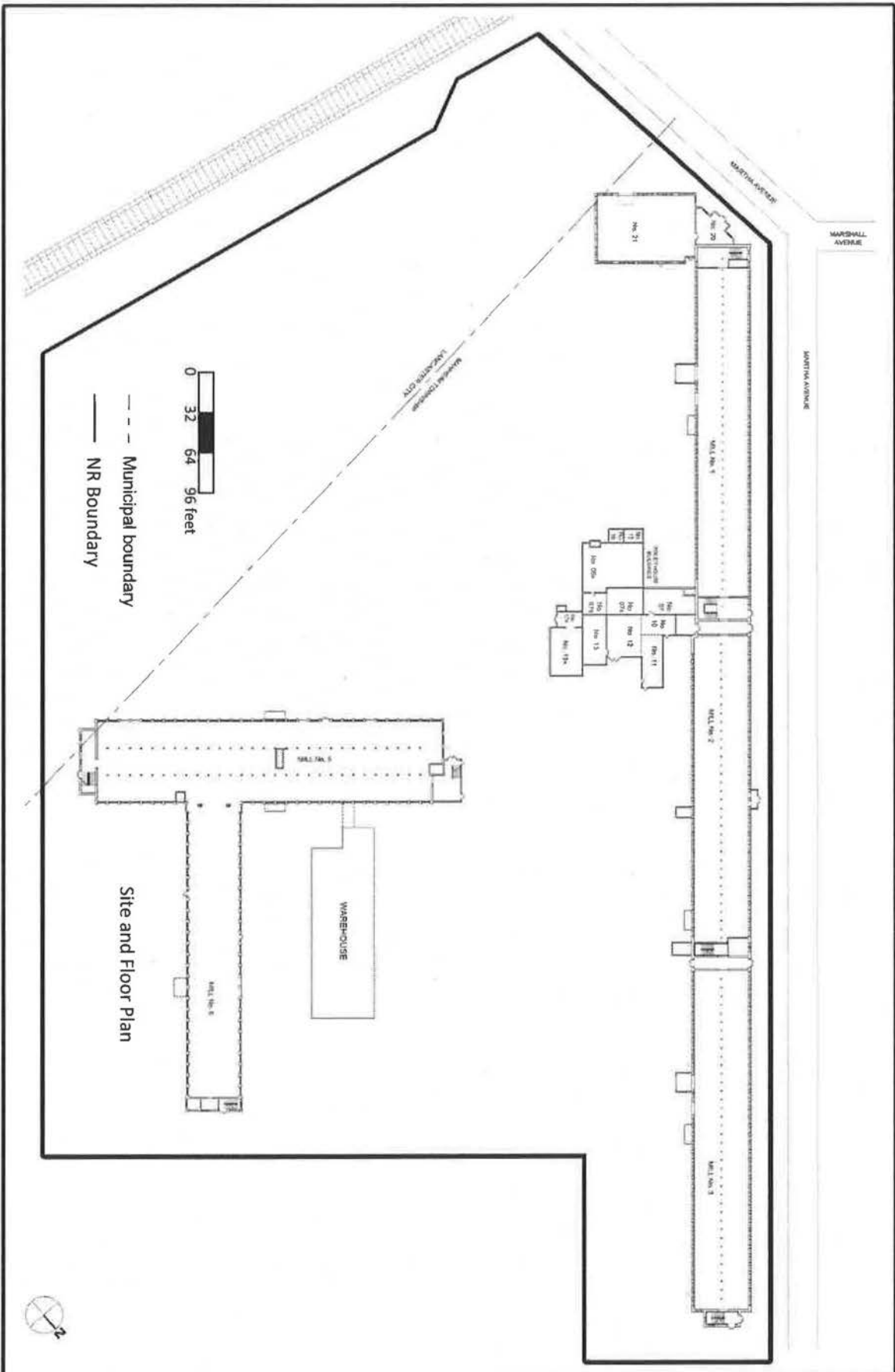
N/A

Name of multiple listing (if applicable)

Company	Location	1916	1925	1928	1931	1935	1938	1941	1947	1950	1953	1956
Wm G. Leninger Knitting Mill, Inc.	Denver			25			63*					
Lucelle Silk Mill (throwsters)	Denver					49*						
Widder Bros. Mills, Inc.**	Lancaster									181*	120*	105*
Westerhoff Bros. (Ephrata Silk Mill)	Ephrata	64	79	146	108	302*	46*					
Westerhoff & Napier	Ephrata	124										
Weave Corp.	Denver	64										
Travis Mills Corp.	Lititz											23*
Trabulsi Textile Corp.**	Denver										34*	41*
Stunzi Sons Silk Co.**	Ephrata			29	200	228*	275*	179*	203*	233*	229*	
Storb, Sunder & Co., Inc.**	New Holland	172			197							
Stehli Silks Corp.**	Lancaster & Manheim	1050	1152	1611	1148	1110*	1057*	750*		583*	338*	
Schwarzenbach Huber Co.** (Columbia Silk Mills)	Columbia	375	540	688	653	782*	227*	252*	73*	60*		
S. J. Aronson, Inc.**	Christiana		47	67	72	94*	98*	146*				
Reliable Silk Mfg Co.**	Columbia		95	127								
Plaza Silk Mills**	Leola				65	68*		NA *				
Nassau Fabrics Corp.**	Columbia						48*					
Marietta Silk Co., Inc.**	Columbia								102*	179*	173*	72*
United Throwing Co.**	Columbia						203*	179*				
Marietta Silk Co.**	Marietta		97	238	272	274*	200*	238*	189*	197*	164*	147*
Manor Silk Mills, Inc.	Lancaster						359*	134*				
M. H. Blake, Inc.	Manheim						140*	130*	73*	131*	119*	
Lancaster Silk Mills, Inc.	Lancaster		53	134								
Bern Silk Mills Co.**	Columbia						128*					
Johnson Silk Mfg Co.**	Lancaster		107		70							
George Brown's Sons, Inc.	Mt Joy			30	58	51*						
Frank Ix & Sons**	New Holland					123*	294*	350*	434*	524*	425*	358*
Follmer, Clogg & Co. (umbrellas)	Lancaster		433		407*							
Faye Silk Co.**	Columbia											
Duplan Silk Corp.**	Marietta					153*						
Blue Bird Silk Mfg Co.**	Columbia					277*	268*	116*	44*	64*	76*	85*
Bentley Silk Corp.**	Columbia		77									
American Silk Mills, Inc. (2 plants)**	Lancaster				42	321*	294*	242*				
Amalgamated Silk Corp.**	Marietta		139									
Amalgamated Silk Corp.**	Lancaster		92	246								
D. G. Dery (Allentown).	Marietta	131										

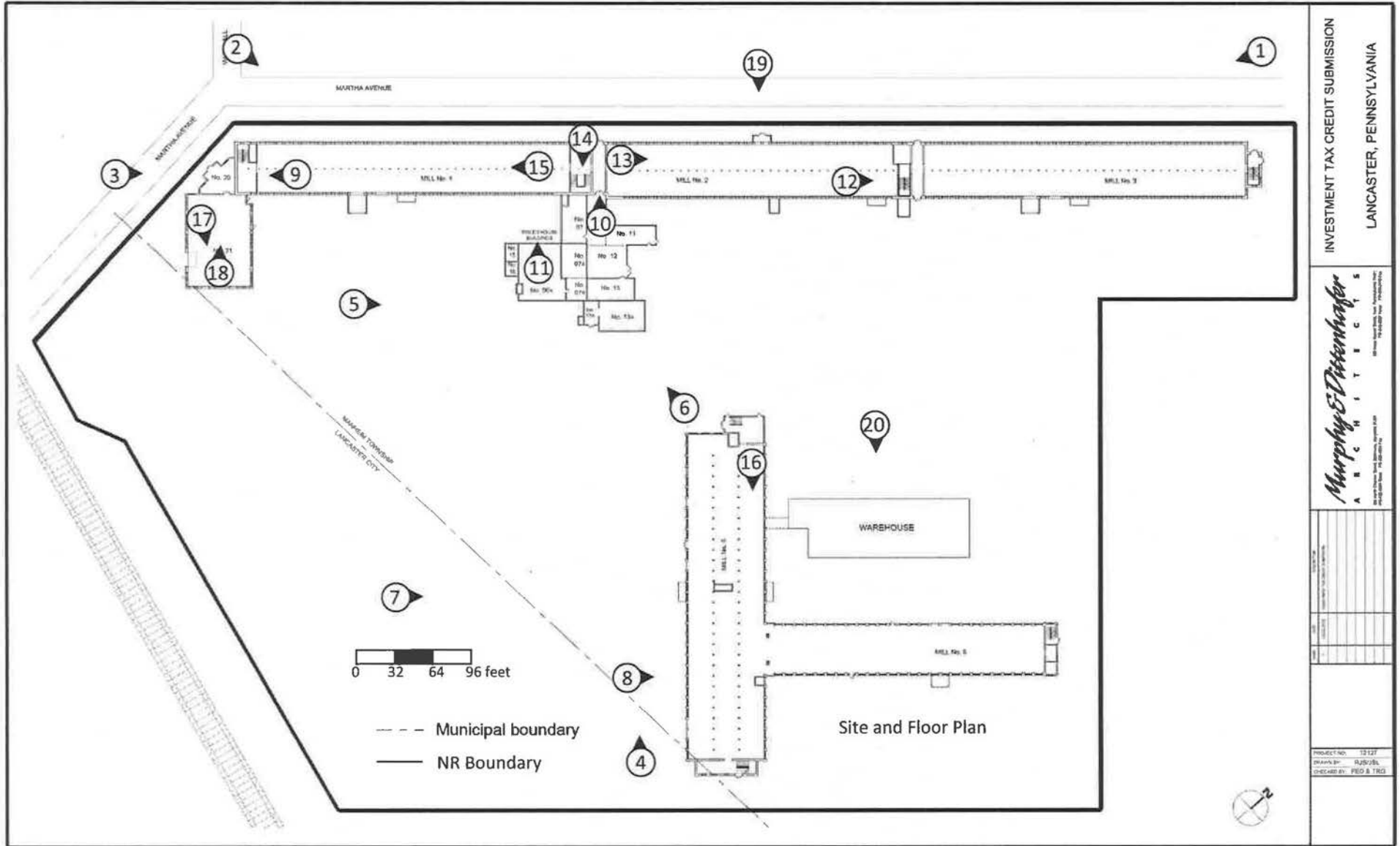
**Table 2:** Lancaster County Silk Mills, *Industrial Directory of Pennsylvania* for the years 1916-1956.

(\*\*indicates corporate HQ in NYC or NJ; \*indicates production included rayon in the 1930s or nylon thereafter).



<p><i>Murphy &amp; Dittenhafer</i> ARCHITECTS</p> <p>100 South Third Street, Lancaster, Pennsylvania PA 17302 Phone: 717.391.1111 Fax: 717.391.1112</p>		<p>INVESTMENT TAX CREDIT SUBMISSION</p> <p>LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA</p>
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STEHLI SILK MILL  
Lancaster County, PA



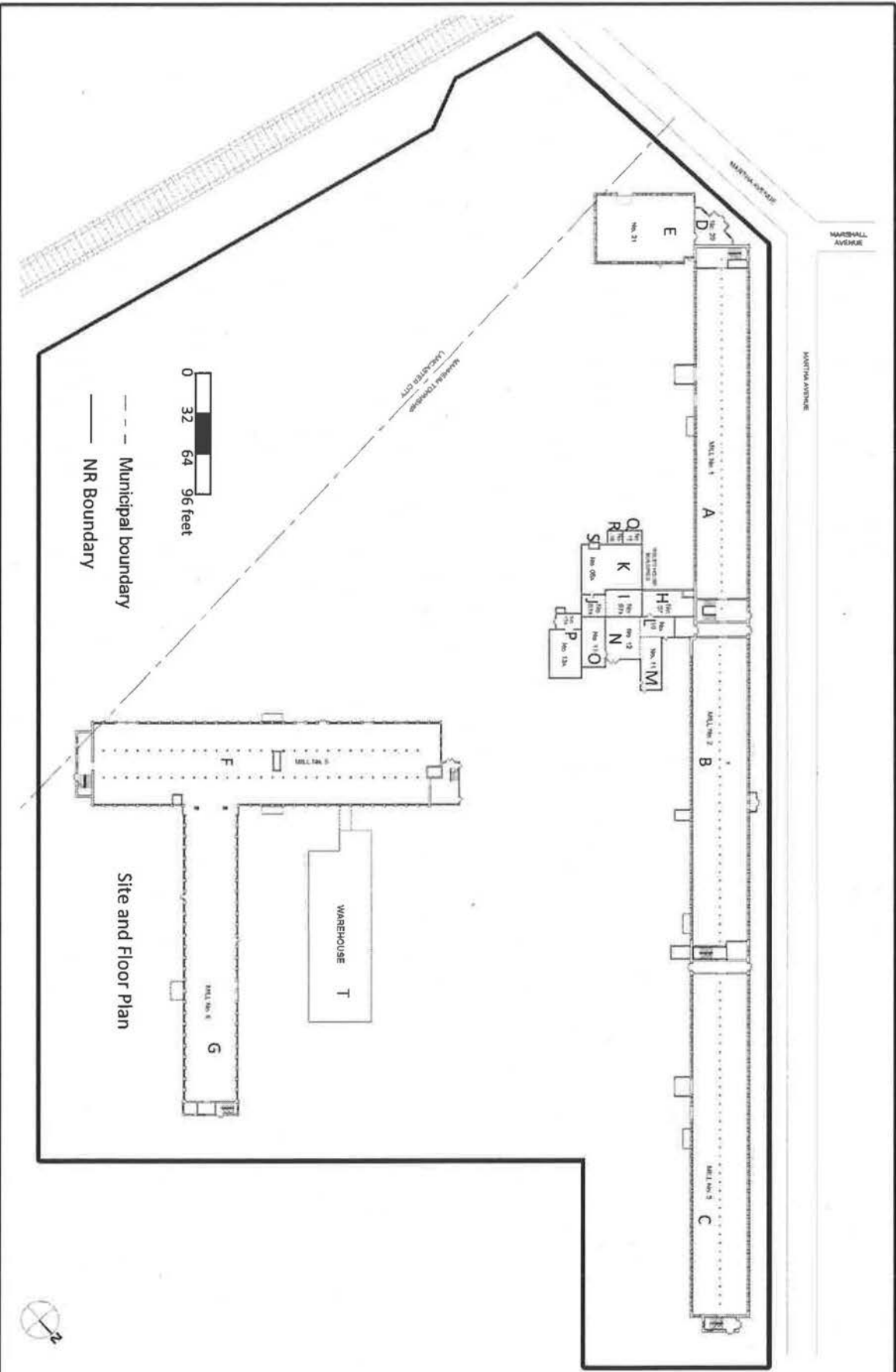
INVESTMENT TAX CREDIT SUBMISSION

LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA

*Murphy & Ditzler*  
ARCHITECTS  
1000 Peach Street, Lancaster, PA 17303  
717-391-1111

NO.	DATE	DESCRIPTION

PROJECT NO. 13127  
DRAWN BY: RJS/28  
CHECKED BY: PEO & TRG

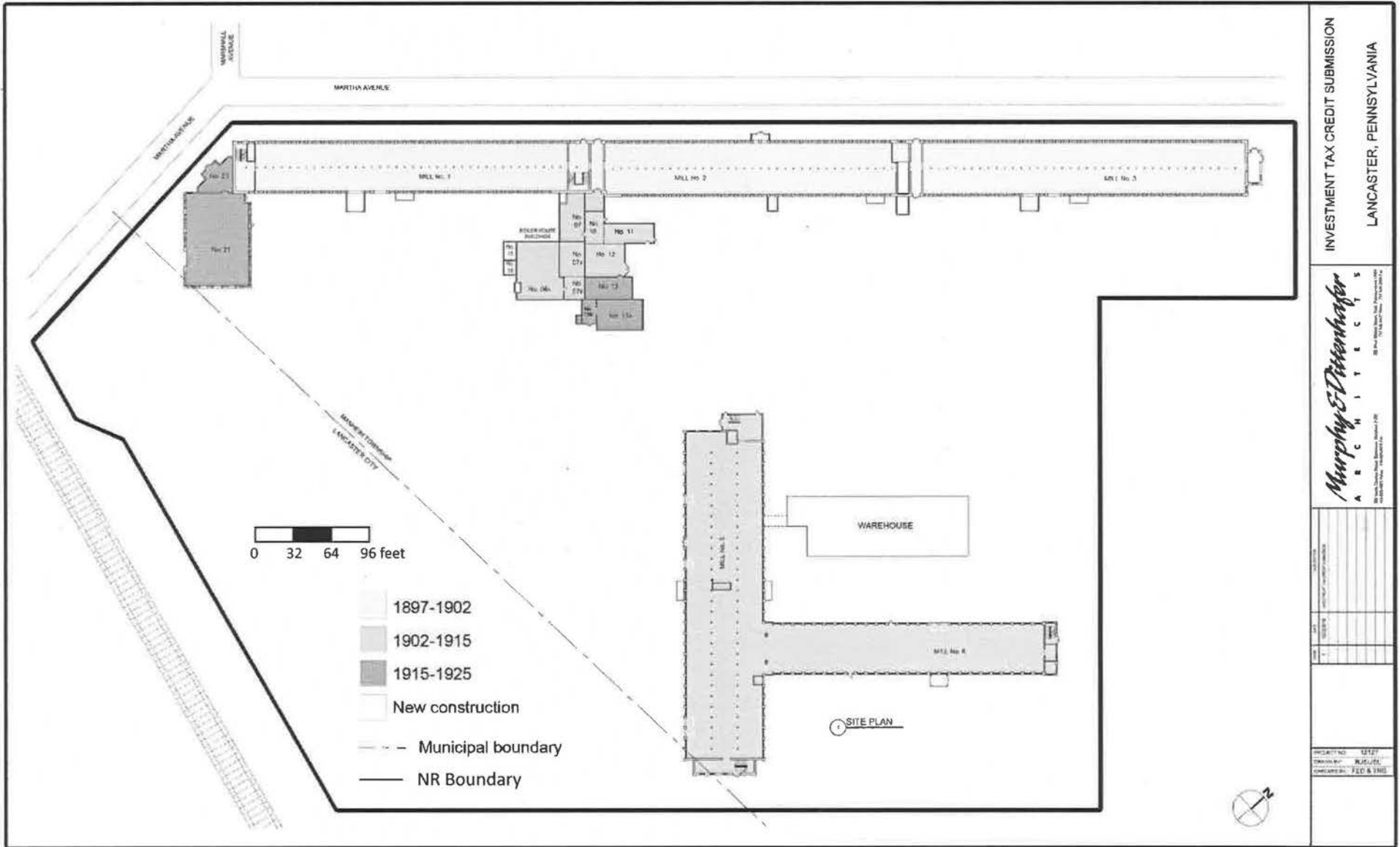


Site and Floor Plan

--- Municipal boundary  
 — NR Boundary

0 32 64 96 feet





INVESTMENT TAX CREDIT SUBMISSION

LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA

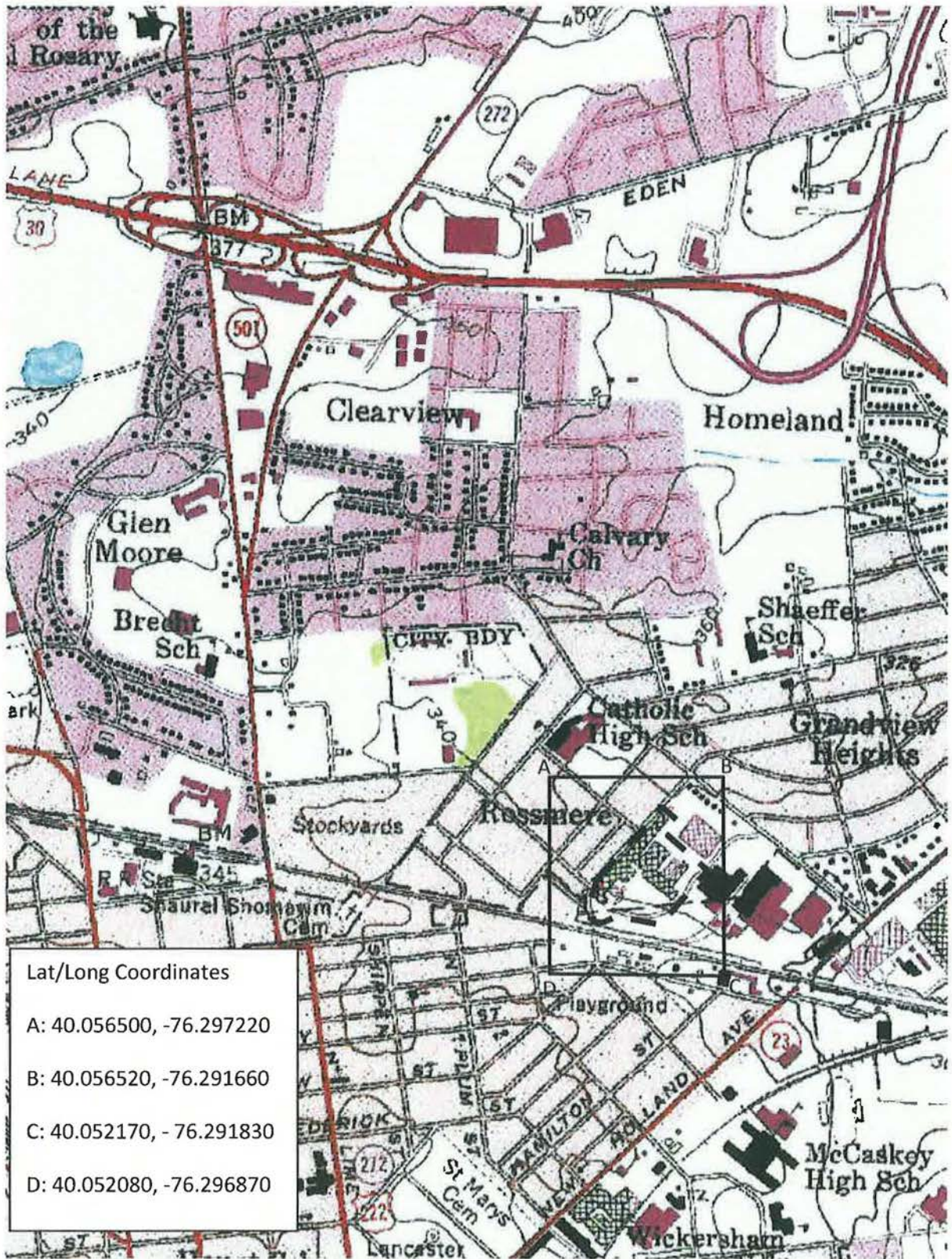
*Murphy & Pfenninger*  
ARCHITECTS  
1800 North 22nd Street, Suite 200  
Lancaster, PA 17602  
Tel: 717-391-1111  
Fax: 717-391-1112

PROJECT NO.	0217
DRAWN BY	RJS/SL
CHECKED BY	FED & VMS
DATE	
REVISIONS	
NO.	
DESCRIPTION	

State: PA  
 County: Lancaster  
 Municipality: Manheim Township/City of Lancaster  
 Historic Name: Stehli and Company

Building Complex Form  
 Key #157395

Photo #s	Historic Building / Structure / Feature No.	Addition	Map No.	Date or Period	Height/ Stories	Structural Material	Exterior Material	Window type	Historic Use	C/NC
2, 4, 5, 6, 9, 14, 15	Mill No. 1		A	1897-1898	3	Brick masonry with wood heavy timber	Brick	12/12 dhwd sash	Weaving	C
1, 2, 10, 12, 13, 19	Mill No. 2		B	1899	3	Brick masonry with wood heavy timber	Brick	12/12 dhwd sash	Weaving	C
1	Mill No. 3		C	1902	3	Brick masonry with wood heavy timber	Brick	12/12 dhwd sash	Weaving	C
7, 8, 16	Mill No. 5		F	1914-1915	3	Brick masonry with wood heavy timber	Brick	36 lite metal ind. sash	Weaving	C
	Mill No. 6		G	1914-1915	3	Brick masonry with steel beams	Brick	36 lite metal ind. sash	Weaving	C
20	New Construction		T	c. 2000	1	Steel frame	Metal panel	None	N/A	NC
4, 5, 11	Boiler House Complex	Building #6A	K	c. 1910	1	Brick masonry	Brick	Clerestory	Boiler House	C
		Building #7	H	c. 1910	1	Brick masonry	Brick	Windows removed	Addition to Boiler House	C
		Building #7A	I	c. 1910	1	Brick masonry	Brick	Clerestory	Addition to Boiler House	C
		Building #7B	J	c. 1910	1	Brick masonry	Brick	Windows removed	Addition to Boiler House	C
		Building #10	L	c. 1910	1	Brick masonry	Brick	Windows removed	Addition to Boiler House	C
		Building #11	M	c. 1910	2	Brick masonry	Brick	12/12 dhwd sash	Addition to Boiler House	C
		Building #12	N	c. 1910	2	Brick masonry	Brick	12/12 dhwd sash	Addition to Boiler House	C
6		Building #13	O	1915-1925	1	Brick masonry	Brick	9/9 dhwd sash	Addition to Boiler House	C
4, 6		Building #13A	P	1915-1925	1	Brick masonry	Brick	Mixed type of mtl ind. sash	Addition to Boiler House	C
5		Building #15	Q	1915-1925	1	Brick masonry	Brick	9/9 dhwd sash	Pump House	C
5	Building #16	R	1915-1925	1	Brick masonry	Brick	9/9 dhwd sash	Oil House	C	
3, 6, 17, 18	Mill No. 21		E	c. 1925	1	Brick masonry	Brick	8/12 dhwd sash with 8-lite wood transom, and clerestory	Ladies Dining Room	C
3	Mill No. 20		D	c. 1925	1	Brick masonry	Brick	9/9 dhwd sash	Connector	C
4, 5	Smoke stack		S	1915-1925		Brick masonry	Brick	None	Mechanical system exhaust	C



Lat/Long Coordinates  
A: 40.056500, -76.297220  
B: 40.056520, -76.291660  
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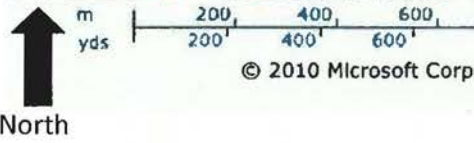


Image courtesy of the U.S. Geological Survey

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Sells  
RENTALS

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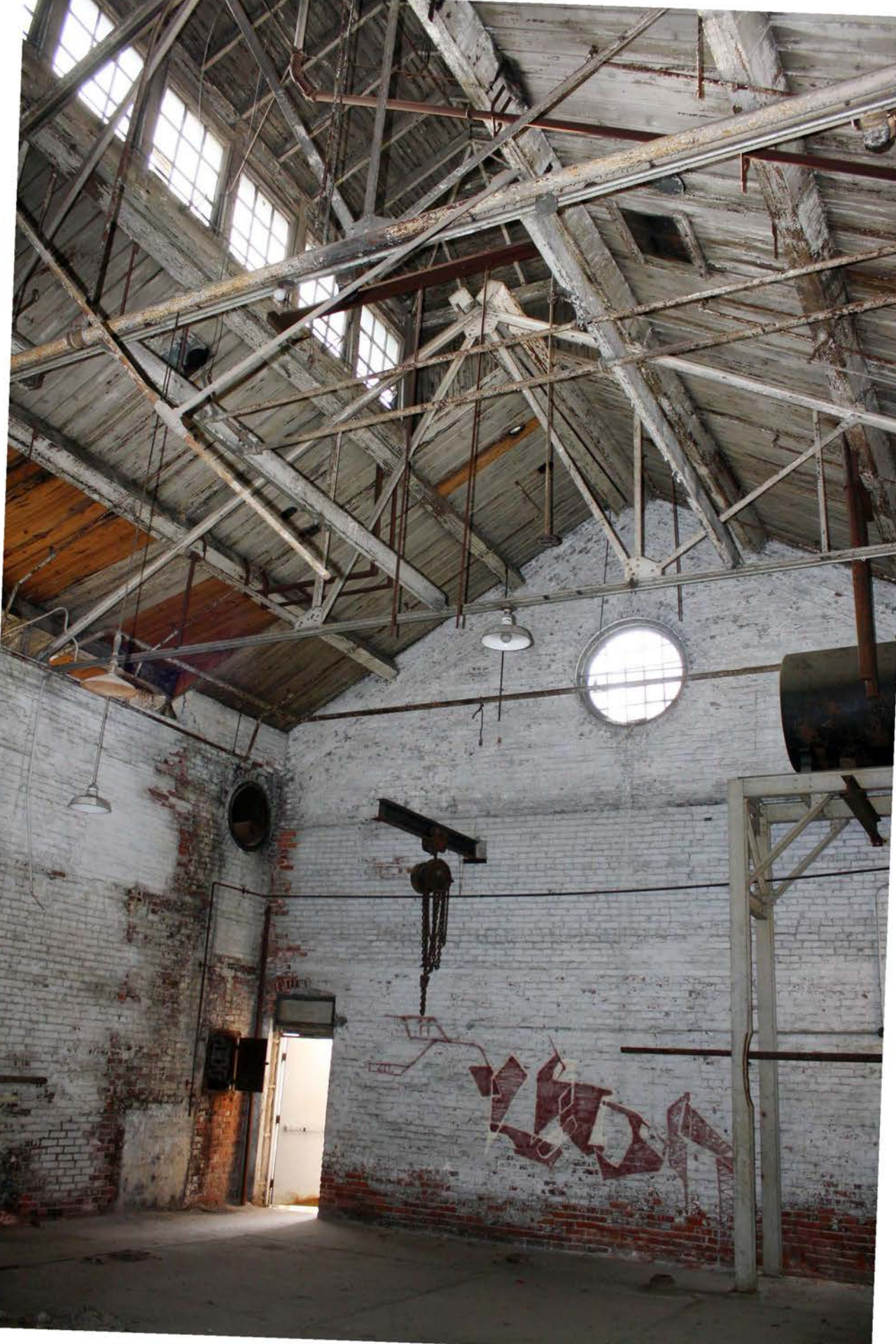
































UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

REQUESTED ACTION: NOMINATION

PROPERTY NAME: Stehli Silk Mill

MULTIPLE NAME:

STATE & COUNTY: PENNSYLVANIA, Lancaster

DATE RECEIVED: 3/18/14      DATE OF PENDING LIST: 4/11/14  
DATE OF 16TH DAY: 4/28/14      DATE OF 45TH DAY: 5/04/14  
DATE OF WEEKLY LIST:

REFERENCE NUMBER: 14000195

REASONS FOR REVIEW:

APPEAL: N    DATA PROBLEM: N    LANDSCAPE: N    LESS THAN 50 YEARS: N  
OTHER: N    PDIL: N    PERIOD: N    PROGRAM UNAPPROVED: N  
REQUEST: Y    SAMPLE: N    SLR DRAFT: N    NATIONAL: Y

COMMENT WAIVER: N

ACCEPT     RETURN     REJECT    4/29/2014 DATE

ABSTRACT/SUMMARY COMMENTS:

*One of the most important silk manufacturing plants in the U.S.*

RECOM./CRITERIA Accept A  
REVIEWER Patrick Andrus    DISCIPLINE Historian  
TELEPHONE \_\_\_\_\_    DATE 4/29/2014

DOCUMENTATION see attached comments Y/N see attached SLR Y/N

If a nomination is returned to the nominating authority, the nomination is no longer under consideration by the NPS.

# City of Lancaster



DEPARTMENT OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
AND NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION



January 30, 2014

Mr. Keith T. Heinrich  
National Register and Survey  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission  
Commonwealth Keystone Building, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093

RE: **Stehli Silk Mill, Manheim Township & Lancaster City, Key #157395**

Dear Mr. Heinrich:

This letter from the City of Lancaster, a Certified Local Government, is written in support of the nomination of the Stehli Silk Mill to the National Register of Historic Places. Only a small portion of the property parcel is located within the City of Lancaster. However, the silk mill played an important role in Lancaster's industrial and social history, employing a large local workforce that prompted construction of workers' rowhouses on surrounding City blocks (which were documented in the 1930s by photographer Lewis Hine). The mill buildings also played a role in Lancaster's post-World War II manufacturing history when acquired by the RCA Corporation in 1955. We offer the following specific comments on the nomination itself:

The property meets eligibility under Criteria A, for its association with local, regional and national industrial history, in this case the domestic textile industry. Examples of other nineteenth-century companies that once operated extensive manufacturing complexes within Lancaster, from which large-scale multi-story brick industrial buildings have been adaptively reused, include: Follmer, Clogg & Company Umbrella Works (now apartments), the Conestoga Cotton Steam Mills (extant buildings now housing a public school and social service agency), the Hamilton Watch Company (now apartments and office suites) and the former Lancaster Cork Works (now senior housing) which merged to become the Armstrong Cork Company, later Armstrong World Industries (site currently undergoing redevelopment).

Although the original landscaped grounds of the Stehli complex have been altered, and outbuildings have been demolished, surviving structures -- in particular the three main brick mill buildings described in the nomination -- retain historic integrity. These buildings display architectural detailing typical of local utilitarian industrial buildings from the late nineteenth century. The long north elevation in particular conveys the original siting, mass, scale and detailing of the buildings, with brick pilasters dividing 120 rhythmic bays. Intact character-defining features include the masonry pilasters and corbelling, and abundant window openings with double rowlock lintels and double-hung divided-lite wooden sash. The timber frame structural system defines the large open interior space served by natural lighting.

PO BOX 1599 120 N. DUKE STREET LANCASTER, PENNSYLVANIA 17608-1599  
(T) 717-291-4759 (TDD) 717-291-4761 (FAX) 717-291-4721  
[WWW.CITYOFLANCASTERPA.COM](http://WWW.CITYOFLANCASTERPA.COM)

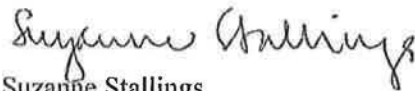
Mr. Keith T. Heinrich  
Bureau for Historic Preservation  
January 30, 2014  
Page Two

The property was not included in Lancaster City's National Register Historic District since most of the parcel lies outside the City's geographic limits. The northeast boundary of Lancaster's National Register district, just south of the Stehli site, includes the south side of East Ross Street but excludes the north side of the block based on late-twentieth-century construction and modern intrusions south of the railway line.

In regard to regional plans, the City of Lancaster and Manheim Township were among eleven municipalities that adopted a regional plan in 2007 entitled *Growing Together: A Comprehensive Plan for Central Lancaster County, Pennsylvania*. A chapter in the plan entitled "Historic Resource Protection" presents as an overall goal: "Historic resources will be preserved, maintained and reused to recognize and reinforce the historic character of both urban and rural areas." Although *Growing Together* does not recognize any individual properties not already listed in the National Register when the plan was adopted in 2007, National Register listing is promoted under one of the plan's stated objectives: "Develop incentives to encourage private involvement and investment in preserving and maintaining historic resources."

Individual listing of the Stehli Silk Mill in the National Register will complement Lancaster City's large multiple resource district, based on the historical connection between this industrial site, the growth of adjacent City neighborhoods and Lancaster's labor history. A number of proposed redevelopment plans for the site over the past thirty years have not panned out, but the property remains a prime site for mixed-use development. This National Register nomination will bring attention to the property's historical development and its prominent national role in the textile industry, as well as the character and quality of its historic architecture.

Sincerely,



Suzanne Stallings  
Historic Preservation Specialist  
Department of Economic Development and  
Neighborhood Revitalization



Pennsylvania  
Historical & Museum  
Commission



March 12, 2014

Carol Shull, Acting Keeper  
National Register of Historic Places  
U.S. Department of Interior  
National Park Service  
1201 "I" (Eye) Street, NW, 8th floor  
Washington D.C. 20005

Re: NR nomination forms

Dear Ms Shull:

The following nomination forms are being submitted for your review:

Strip Historic District, Allegheny County  
Stehli Silk Mill, Lancaster County

The proposed action is listing in the National Register.

Regarding the Strip Historic District, staff felt that the period of significance should end in 1964, following the Park Service's 50 year guideline because the district appears to have remained significant well into the past 50 year period and the district does not appear exceptionally significant. The Historic Preservation Board, however, felt that 1964 was arbitrary and suggested that the period of significance should extend to 1979, based on the information in the nomination. The minutes of that discussion are enclosed for your review.

If you have any questions regarding the nominations please contact Keith Heinrich at 717-783-9919.

Sincerely,

Keith T. Heinrich  
National Register and Survey

Historic Preservation Services  
Commonwealth Keystone Building  
400 North Street  
Harrisburg, PA 17120-0093  
www.phmc.state.pa.us  
*The Commonwealth's Official History Agency*

### **Nomination Reviews**

The meeting reconvened following lunch and Chair Richard Leonori led the introduction of Board members, staff members, and visitors, and explained the process of the National Register nomination reviews.

3. Stehli Silk Mill, 701 Martha Avenue, Manheim Township and Lancaster City, Lancaster County, Key #157395

Guests: Frank Dittenhafer, Bonnie Wilkinson Mark, Carol Lee, Matthew Bupp

Discussion: Keith Heinrich gave staff comments. Chair Richard Leonori noted that there was a letter of support from the Certified Local Government. Richard Burkert said that he was amazed at the incentives that were offered to the company, such as construction of a railroad siding and bricks for construction, to get them to locate in Lancaster. He stated that the nomination provided a very well-done history of both the property and the fashion industry, adding that the nomination provided lots of support for the property's significance. Steve Burg noted that the nomination was very well-done and featured a great discussion of the silk manufacturing process and how this building illustrated that process. He noted that the statement of significance was strong. Gerry Kuncio asked if the stone entry piers were included in the National Register boundary and Margaret Newman asked if they had been counted. Preparers Bonnie Wilkinson Mark and Carol Lee responded that they were included in the boundary but that they were uncounted landscape features because of their small scale; Carol Lee added that their status would be clarified when the nomination was finalized. Gerry Kuncio stated that he had noted several copy-edits, such as incorrect mill numbering, that needed to be made to the form. Keith Heinrich responded that he would make the changes. Margaret Newman asked why both letters and numbers were used to identify the resources on the property, noting that using both added a layer of complexity. Co-preparer Bonnie Wilkinson Mark replied that the use of both numbers and letters was based on previous staff guidance. Margaret Newman responded that if that was what staff wanted, it was fine. Gerry Kuncio asked if the level of significance should be national.

Motion: Accept

Motion by: Steve Burg

Second: Suzanna Barucco

Criteria: A

Level of Significance: National

Vote: All agree

4. Strip Historic District, Roughly bounded by Railroad Street, the Former Pennsylvania Railroad yards, 22<sup>nd</sup> Street, Liberty Avenue, and 15<sup>th</sup> Street, Pittsburgh City, Allegheny County, Key #096928

Guests: Karamagi Rujumba

Discussion: Keith Heinrich presented staff comments. Chair Richard Leonori noted that there was a letter of support from the Certified Local Government. Karamagi Rujumba from Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation gave comments in support of the nomination. Brian Fritz stated that the nomination was very well-written and added that, in the 1950s and 1960s, his family was farmers and they would drive their produce from Somerset County to the Strip to sell it. Marty Rosenblum stated that the nomination was well-done, but said that he had



heard that some resources in the district may come or go. Richard Leonori responded that that is the case with most districts. Marty Rosenblum pointed out that there were 66 contributing and 43 noncontributing resources, noting that that meant that more than 1/3, closer to 40%, of the resources were noncontributing. He also noted that there were small but noticeable gaps in the district and added that that is the case in most urban districts. He asked if the Board was being consistent if they disregarded these gaps. He wondered if this district would become a benchmark for future decisions and noted that the Board's decision on this district should be kept in mind for future urban districts. He did, however, state that the district had a strong story to tell. Suzanna Barucco responded that the district looked cohesive based on the photos. Steve Burg added that, based on the photos, the district appeared cohesive and asked if the photos were not reflective of the district. Jeff Slack responded that he has been to the district many times and pointed out that the scale of the district is important to keep in mind. It is like a marina where the oceanliners are present, but some of the tugboats are not. He also stated that the buildings with a produce and warehouse history remain and that he wished that, instead of raw numbers, the square footage of the gaps was listed. Patrick Shattuck added that, based on street frontage, the district is cohesive and holds together very well. He pointed out that, on the street level, the boundaries are very clear. Suzanna Barucco stated that it was nice to see that the canopies remain. Richard Burkert noted that he loved the nomination and the fact that the district hangs together as a produce center, adding that the Smallman Street corridor is particularly impressive. He pointed out that he loved how the district ties into the earlier history of the area and how the nomination explained how the produce industry worked. Richard Leonori asked what happens if the Pennsylvania Fruit Auction and Sales Building, or Produce Terminal, is razed. Jeff Slack responded that there have been no proposals that he is aware of to raze the entire Produce Terminal, and that the only proposal he was aware of would cut off part of the building, about 1/3 of it, roughly corresponding to the addition that was added to the building 22 months after initial construction. He noted that the Pittsburgh History and Landmarks Foundation had supported that plan, but added that the newly elected mayor of Pittsburgh had called for a third option. Brian Fritz pointed out that the board needs to base its decision on current conditions, not what might happen in the future. Richard Leonori stated that he did not like 1963 as the end date to the period of significance and asked if it was only chosen because the nomination was written in 2013. He wondered, if that was the case, whether the period of significance should end in 1964 since the Board was considering the nomination in 2014. Richard Burkert replied that the produce distribution industry is largely gone now and the district has become dominated by food retail and entertainment. He asked what the most appropriate period of significance would be, perhaps when the railroad yards were removed. Steve Burg noted that there are still 2 produce wholesalers in the district. Richard Burkert noted that when the railroad removed its tracks, the character of the district changed. Gerry Kuncio pointed out that the railroad went bankrupt in 1970/1971 and asked if that would be an appropriate end to the period of significance since that was when the area started to decline as a wholesale produce distribution center. Brian Fritz asked why 1926 was listed as a significant date. Suzanna Barucco suggested that the motion should revise the end date for the period of significance. Gerry Kuncio stated that the period of significance was based on the 50 year rule, which was arbitrary and noted that the nomination pointed out that, in the last 30 years, retail had come to dominate the area. Jeff Slack added that by 1990, the district was mostly retail. Steve Burg said that the date should end in 1970 and Jeff Slack pointed out that the railroad's bankruptcy only affected the terminal, not necessarily the entire district. Keith Heinrich pointed out that because the district remained

significant past 1964, the end date of the period of significance would be somewhat arbitrary. Jim Vaughan suggested 1983 as the end of the period of significance because the district switched to mostly retail about 30 years ago. Jeff Slack confirmed that 1983 corresponded generally to the switchover to retail. Gerry Kuncio noted that, based on the nomination, 1979 was an appropriate end to the period of significance.

Motion: Accept

Motion by: Steve Burg

Second: Gerry Kuncio

Criteria: A

Level of Significance: Local

Vote: All agree (with a proposed change of the end date of the period of significance to 1979, corresponding to the changeover to retail).