

5-29-73

PH 015 750

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Delaware	
COUNTY: New Castle	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	APR 1 1973

1. NAME

COMMON:  
Cooch's Bridge Historic District

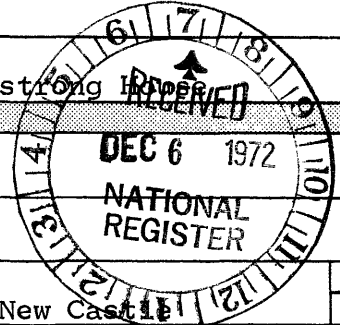
AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Cooch House, Dayett House and Mill, Armstrong

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: *N of Newark to D. 290*  
Old Baltimore Turnpike

CITY OR TOWN:  
(Cooch's Bridge) Newark

STATE: Delaware CODE: 10 COUNTY: New Castle CODE: 003



3. CLASSIFICATION

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

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Edward W. Cooch, Dayett Mills, Inc., and others

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Old Baltimore Turnpike

CITY OR TOWN: Newark STATE: Delaware CODE: 10

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
The Public Building

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Rodney Square

CITY OR TOWN: Wilmington STATE: Delaware CODE: 10

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Buildings Survey, No. Del-57

DATE OF SURVEY: 1937  Federal  State  County  Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Library of Congress

STREET AND NUMBER:  
Washington, D.C.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_

ENTRY NUMBER: APR 1 1973

DATE: \_\_\_\_\_

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7 DESCRIPTION

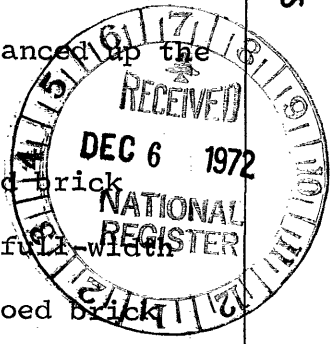
CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered	<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The complex of historic structures and sites around Cooch's Bridge includes the houses, mills, dams, and sites associated with more than two and a half centuries of industrial development. The industrial sites here, and the roads that served them, undoubtedly were important in Washington's decision to fight a holding action on the Christina during September of 1777.

The historic site stretches from William Cooch's upper dam to the tailrace of Dayett's Mill, and includes the sites of the first Cooch mill and of Sir William Keith's abortive ironmaking venture. William Cooch's mill of 1791, and the pre-Revolutionary Cooch mansion still stand in a much-altered condition. A raceway from the dams on the Christina and on Purgatory Swamp still provides the power for Dayett's Mill. The Dayett House, and the Armstrong House on the opposite bank of the Christina, are both nineteenth-century residences built by members of the Cooch family. On a line roughly between the Armstrong and Dayett houses, the old ford crosses the Christina; here the American troops made their stand as the British advanced up the road from Aiken's Tavern.

The Cooch House, in its present form, is a stuccoed brick structure, 2½ stories high with a low gable roof and a full-width portico. The Armstrong House, to the south, is a stuccoed brick Greek Revival structure with a small portico on the east frontage. The Dayett House, also of stuccoed brick, features a mansard roof and a recently-added portico. The Dayett Mill is 3½ stories high, of brick, with a mansard roof; it contains roller-mill machinery that



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**6. SIGNIFICANCE**

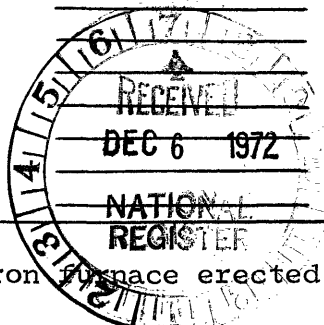
PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

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

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			



STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Cooch's Bridge is the site of the third iron furnace erected in British America, and of the only Revolutionary battle fought on Delaware soil.

The land around Cooch's Bridge was near the eastern boundary of the Welsh Tract, a 30,000-acre grant to a group of Welsh immigrants who settled in western New Castle County during the first decade of the eighteenth century. Some of these settlers were millwrights, millers, and ironworkers who soon established mills and forges along the branches of the several creeks in the vicinity. Of these creeks, the Christina offered the best head of water for industry; since it flowed through the ore-rich Iron Hill region, the Christina was an ideal power source for ironworking. At least two blast furnaces were established at the foot of Iron Hill, and several forges are known to have operated nearby.

Sir William Keith, the Governor of Pennsylvania and The Three Lower Counties began buying land on the Christina in 1722, with the intention of establishing an iron plantation to be known as Keithsborough. There were already dams and mills on the land he bought; there may have been bloomery forges in operation on the property as well. Keith gave up his plan for an iron plantation in 1726, when he sold the mill seats to John England, the iron master at Principio in Maryland, who had

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**9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Cooch, Edward W. The Battle of Cooch's Bridge. Cooch's Bridge (Del.): Author, 1940.  
 Scharf, J. Thomas. History of Delaware, 1609-1888. 2 vol. Philadelphia: L.J. Richards & Co., 1888.  
Biographical and Geneological History of the State of Delaware. Chambersburg (Pa.): J.M. Runk & Co., 1899.

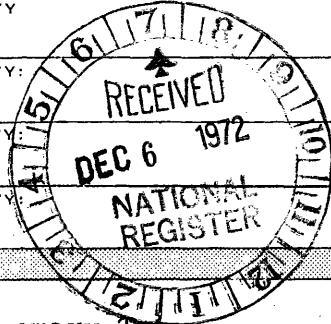
**10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	39 ° 38 ' 48"	75 ° 44 ' 45"		°	'	"
NE	39 ° 38 ' 48"	75 ° 43 ' 02"				
SE	39 ° 38 ' 10"	75 ° 43 ' 02"				
SW	39 ° 38 ' 10"	75 ° 44 ' 45"				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 200

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



**11. FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME AND TITLE:  
 Edward F. Heite, Joan M. Norton and Rosemary Troy

ORGANIZATION: Division of Historical and Cultural Affairs      DATE: 10/17/72

STREET AND NUMBER:  
 Hall of Records

CITY OR TOWN: Dover      STATE: Delaware      CODE: 10

**12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

**NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION**

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name Dr. E. Berkeley Tompkins

Title Director, Div. of Historical and Cultural Affairs

Date Nov. 27, 1972

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

Robert W. Utley  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date 4/11/73

ATTEST:  
Wm. Smith  
 Keeper of the National Register

Date 4.3.73

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7. DESCRIPTION (continued)---

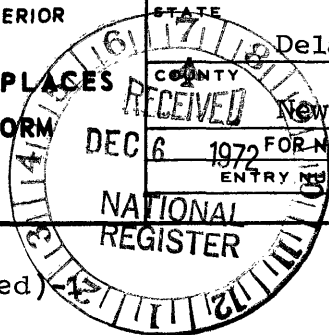
can be operated by water or electricity. A railroad siding serves the mill. The foundations of the William Cooch mill are now surmounted by a modern barn. Thomas Cooch's mill site may be discerned as a depression in the meadow. The earlier mill dam, which may have served William Keith's abortive iron works, may be seen as an earthen bank near the Purgatory Swamp dam.



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8. STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (Continued)

recently emigrated from Tamworth, Staffordshire. England and his heirs owned the property until they sold it, in several parcels, to Thomas Cooch a few years before the American Revolution.

By the time Thomas Cooch arrived on the scene, iron manufacture at Iron Hill had virtually ceased; Cooch was a miller who bought up the better mill seats for development. He was an aggressive businessman who chose the best properties and worked at every aspect of their development. On the eve of the Revolution, he had persuaded the County Court to rebuild the bridge at his mill, but the war interrupted his plans and left his mill and bridge in ashes.

After the British army landed on the Elk River in August 1777, General Washington sent a body of picked troops to fight a holding action at Cooch's Bridge while his army entrenched along Red Clay Creek near Stanton. On September 3, 1777, Howe left Head of Elk and Knyphausen moved from Buck Tavern(now Summit) with plans to meet at Aiken's Tavern (Glasgow), near the Continental position, and march on from there. The first shot was fired about a half-mile north of Aiken's and skirmishing continued for two miles beyond Cooch's Bridge as the American forces retreated. A letter from General van Wurmb to General von Jungkenn relates the heroic stand that took place.

After the enemy had shot themselves out of ammunition the fight was carried on with the sword, they being finally put to flight. But they immediately made a stand again, and we drove them away a second time, when they took post beyond Christeen Creek at Cooch's Bridge.

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STATE	Delaware
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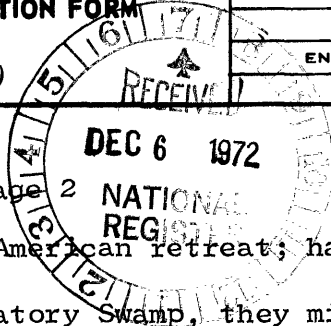
(Number all entries)

8. SIGNIFICANCE (continued)--- page 2

The British tried to cut off the American retreat; had it not been for their inability to penetrate Purgatory Swamp, they might have succeeded.

It has been claimed that the Stars and Stripes were first unfurled in battle here. The flag had been adopted by Congress, June 14, 1777, and was carried in a parade in Philadelphia in August; however, the militia were still using state or regimental banners. The troops at Cooch's Bridge were a special light infantry brigade drawn from seventy regiments. Since colors are important in a battle, and since only the national flag would be meaningful to all of the regiment, it is possible that it was carried.

During the battle, the British burned Cooch's Mill and took possession of his house, as a headquarters for General Cornwallis. The grist mill was not rebuilt until the property passed to Thomas Cooch's grandson, William, in 1791. This mill, just east of the bridge, is still extant. In 1838, William Cooch, Jr. inherited the property from his father and built a new mill farther downstream. Around the time of the Civil War, the Cooch mansion was rebuilt in its present form. The land passed in 1870 to Levi Cooch, who conveyed it to Joseph and William Cooch in the same year. Their mill company, known as the Cooch Brothers, used the 3½-story brick building which still stands. It was run entirely by water power from the Christiana until it was remodeled in 1884. John W. Dayett bought Cooch's Mill in 1894 and added all the latest improvements. Twice gutted by fire, in 1916 and 1933, the Dayett Mill was restored each time and is still in operation,



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still using water power from William Cooch's 1792 dam on the Christina and from a smaller dam on Purgatory Swamp.

The Cooch Mansion is still in the possession of the Cooch family.

