

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED  
DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC SALLY ANN FURNACE COMPLEX

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER R. D. #1, Box #169  
Rockland Township, 1 mi. south of Bowers NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN Mertztown VICINITY OF CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 6th

STATE Pennsylvania CODE 42 COUNTY Berks CODE 011

3 CLASSIFICATION

| CATEGORY  | OWNERSHIP                                   | STATUS  | PRESENT USE   |
|---|---|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT               | <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC             | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED        | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE                  |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE | <input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED                 | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM                       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE              | <input type="checkbox"/> BOTH               | <input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS           | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> SITE                   | <input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION | <input type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE                 | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT                 | <input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS         | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED   | <input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED          | <input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT                |
|   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> NO                         | <input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT                   |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL                   |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY                     |
|   |   |   | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:                       |

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Sara S. DeRagon (Mrs. Paul O.)

STREET & NUMBER R. D. #1, Box #169

CITY, TOWN Mertztown VICINITY OF STATE Pennsylvania

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Berks County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER 33 North 6th Street

CITY, TOWN Reading STATE Pennsylvania

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE Pennsylvania Register of Historic Sites and Landmarks

DATE 1975  
 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

CITY, TOWN Box 1026, Harrisburg STATE Pennsylvania

# DESCRIPTION

| CONDITION                                |                                       | CHECK ONE                                   | CHECK ONE   |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT       | <input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED | <input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD | <input type="checkbox"/> RUINS        | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED | <input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> FAIR            | <input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED    |   |   |

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Throughout the 1st half of the 19th century the Sally Ann Furnace complex was one of the major links in eastern Pennsylvania's iron industry. During the height of its operation, in the 1820's, the plantation consisted of 450 acres and 20 buildings and structures. 150 men were employed in the various furnace and agricultural operations of the complex. Most of the original buildings have long since been reduced to ruins and only the foundations remain of the barns, stable, storage sheds, grist mill, and bake ovens.

The furnace itself was established by Valentine Eckert in 1791. The furnace was constructed along the Sacony Creek. The furnace, originally 32 feet high with an 8 foot bosh, is now a crumbled pile of stone. In 1798 on the rise to the northeast of the furnace, Eckert constructed a 1½ story stone house. The house was built over a spring which still flows from under the basement wall. The Eckert building was greatly altered over the years. During the 19th century a 2 bay stone section was added to the north gable. During this period the building was used as a combination smokehouse/springhouse. The building is now used as a residence.

The furnace property was acquired by Nicholas Hunter in 1803. In 1814 his son Jacob took over the operation of the furnace and initiated an extensive building program. Most noteworthy of this new construction was the house he built for his new bride. The house is a 2½ story rectangular stuccoed stone building built on the hillside overlooking the creek and furnace. The basement of the east end of the house is exposed permitting a ground level access to the kitchen. A raised stone platform runs along most of the main facade and permits easy access to the first floor. The house is 5 bays in width and two deep. All windows are 6 over 6 sash with panelled shutters. The main entrance located in the center bay consists of a heavy 8 panel door flanked by sidelights. A semicircular transom with sunburst design surmounts the door. Three gable dormers with pilasters and pedimented gables are located in the front and rear slopes of the roof. Fenestration on the rear of the house is identical to the facade. Two doors of simple design are located between the 1st and 2nd and 2nd and 3rd bays. A long shed roof porch runs along the length of the rear of the house. The porch is supported by slender wooden columns. The ornamental ironwork enclosing the porch is of recent construction. The cornice of the gable roof has a wide overhang and is decorated with modillions and a row of dentils. The cornice is carried across the gable ends in a pent eave. Of particular note are the two circular windows located in the attic level of each gable. These recessed windows are surrounded by a carved moulding and feature geometric tracery.

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SALLY ANN FURNACE COMPLEX - Berks County

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 1

The interior of the mansion house contains most of its original appointments. The woodwork, except the doors and the walnut handrail, is all made of heart hemlock. The wrought iron hinges and door locks as well as the brass hardware were imported from England. The original window panes, many of which are still preserved, were also imported from England. There are six fireplaces in the house. The two black marble fireplace mantels in the twin living rooms were imported from Italy. In the cellar is a large walk-in fireplace with folding double doors. Also located in the cellar is the original serving counter. This counter was used in serving meals to furnace employees.

Other buildings on the property include a 1½ story, 3 bay, stone building located to the west of the mansion. This building constructed c. 1820 has 2 small six over six windows located on each side of a centrally located doorway. The building has a low pitched gable roof and two brick chimneys. The building was used as the company store and storekeeper's residence. The only other remaining 19th century structure is the 2½ story stuccoed stone granary. The foundations of a cow barn and mule stable are located to the northwest of the mansion. Foundations of a twin bake oven are still visible on the north side of the Valentine Eckert House.

The property as a whole is in a good state of repair. The mansion house was restored in the 1920's and is in excellent condition. Restoration work at the time consisted of repair of the rear porch, general painting and carpentry. New utility systems were also installed.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

| PERIOD  | AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW |  |   |  |
|---|--|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC          | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC  | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING                | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499            | <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC     | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION                      | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW                    | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599            | <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE             | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS                         | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE             | <input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699            | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION                         | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY               | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799 | <input type="checkbox"/> ART                     | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING                       | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC                  | <input type="checkbox"/> THEATER             |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899 | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE                | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY             | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1900-                | <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS          | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY               | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT    | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)     |
|   |  | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION                         |   |  |

SPECIFIC DATES Original Dwelling 1791 BUILDER/ARCHITECT  
 Manor House 1814

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Sally Ann Furnace, begun in 1791 by Valentine Eckert, gained its prominence under the management of the Hunter family, Nicholas Hunter emmigrated to America in 1738. By 1759 he had acquired over 1000 acres in Berks County. Nicholas Hunter, Jr. was the first Hunter to establish himself as an ironmaster. After serving as a major in the Revolutionary War, Nicholas began acquiring iron furnaces. By 1797 he had acquired ownership of the following Berks County furnaces: Potts Furnace, District Furnace, Moselem Furnace, Maiden creek Forge & Furnace, Windsor Furnace, Oley Furnace and Mt. Pleasant Furnace. In 1803 he acquired Eckert's Furnace which was renamed Sally Ann Furnace after his son Jacob's wife.

Jacob Hunter was primarily responsible for the development of Sally Ann Furnace. In 1814, he built the "mansion house" for his residence. Over the years he extensively developed both the industrial and agricultural potentials of this 450 acre tract. In the three year period from 1828-1830 records indicate that 30 tons of pig iron were produced weekly. During this period 150 men with 950 dependents were employed in the various furnace, mill, and farming operations. The workmen and dependents consumed 11,560 bushels of wheat, rye and corn, and 36,000 pounds of beef. The furnace remained in operation until 1869. (During the Civil War Salley Ann Furnace manufactured canon balls for the Union Army.) Ten years later it was reopened but remained in operation only 2 years.

The industrial features of this important iron plantation have been largely obliterated by time. Only the granary and store remain intact. The mansion house, however, has remained virtually unchanged since its construction in 1814. The house has exquisite detail in both interior and exterior decoration and must be counted as one of the most imposing and architecturally significant houses of Berks County.

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

Bining, Arthur Cecil. Pennsylvania Iron Manufacture in the Eighteenth Century. Harrisburg, Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission, 1938. p. 32, p. 52, p. 136.  
Groll, Rev. P. C., D.D. Annals of the Oley Valley. Reading, Reading Eagle Press, 1926, p. 96-103.

Fox, Cyrus T., ed. Reading and Berks County Pennsylvania. a history.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA** New York, Lewis Historical Pub. Co., Inc. 1925. p. 401-402.

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 5 acres

UTM REFERENCES

|   |      |           |             |   |      |         |          |
|---|------|-----------|-------------|---|------|---------|----------|
| A | 1,8  | 43,817,20 | 44,8,01,7,0 | B |      |         |          |
|   | ZONE | EASTING   | NORTHING    |   | ZONE | EASTING | NORTHING |
| C |      |           |             | D |      |         |          |

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |
|-------|------|--------|------|
| STATE | CODE | COUNTY | CODE |

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

William K. Watson, Historic Sites Survey

ORGANIZATION

Office of Historic Preservation

DATE

December, 1975

STREET & NUMBER

Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Comm.

TELEPHONE

Box 1026

717-787-4363

CITY OR TOWN

Harrisburg

STATE

Pennsylvania

**12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL     

STATE     

LOCAL X

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE Executive Director

Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission

DATE

2-18-76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

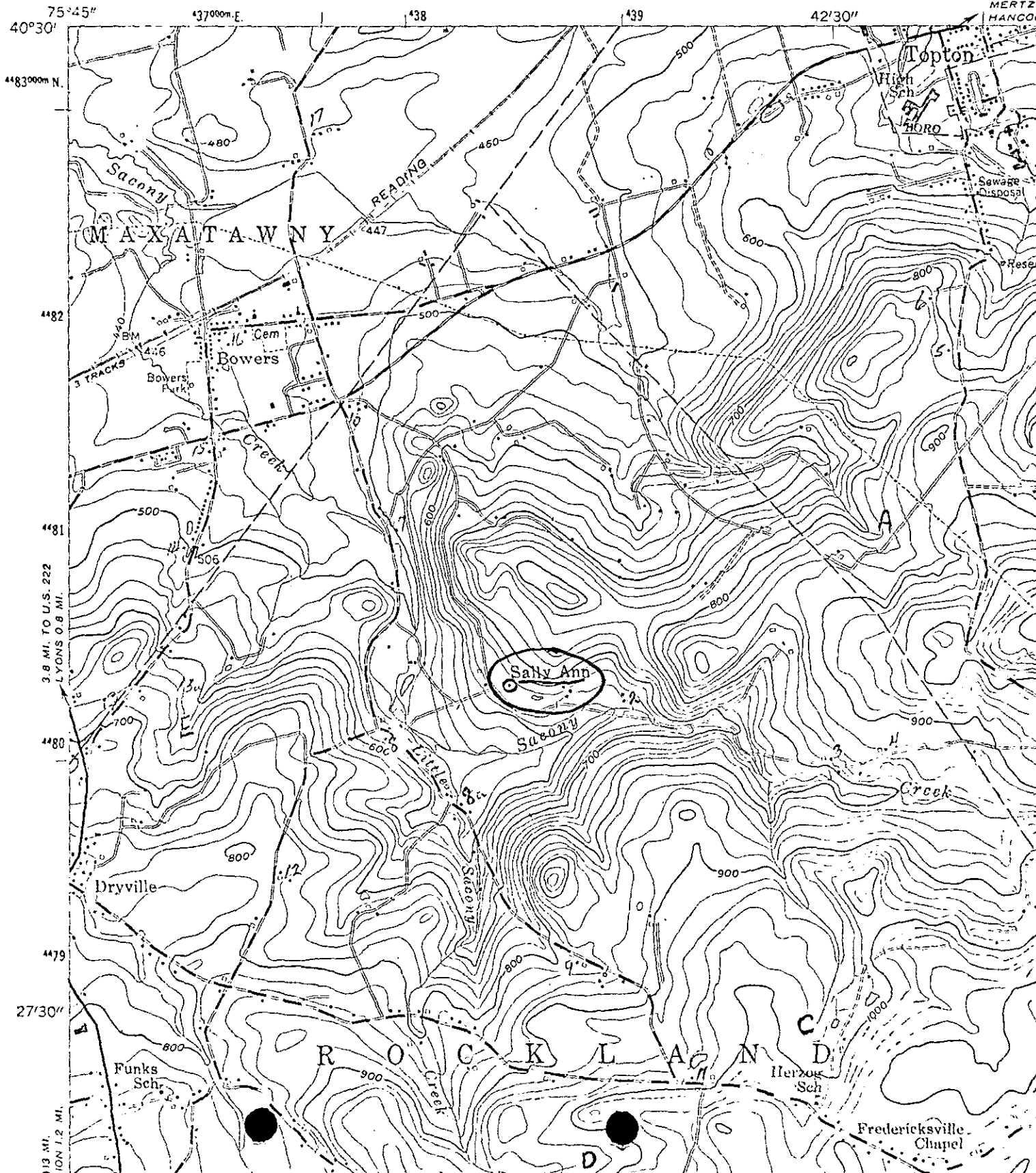
ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

385 (USE  
KUTZTOWN)



3.8 MI. TO U.S. 222  
LYONS 0.8 MI.

1.9 MI.  
ION 1.2 MI.