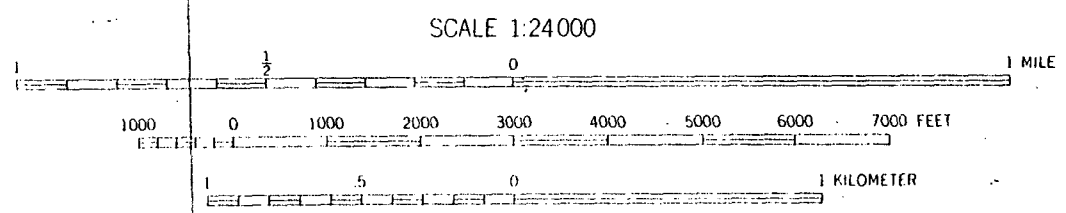
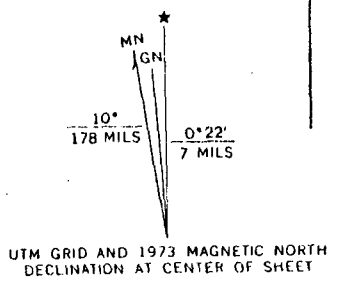


**Prizer's Mill Complex**  
**Chester County**  
**Zone 18 4 acres**

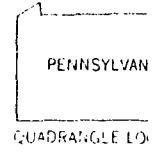
A	N4443120	E451000
B	N4442960	E451230
C	N4442860	E451200
D	N4442920	E451060
E	N4443010	E450970

Geological Survey  
 Parametric  
 Field check 1955  
 datum  
 coordinate system,  
 grid ticks,  
 mark buildings are shown  
 correlation with  
 photographs  
 not field checked



CONTOUR INTERVAL 10 FEET  
 NATIONAL GEODETIC VERTICAL DATUM OF 1929

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS  
 FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, RESTON, VIRGINIA 22092  
 A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



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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  
Prizer's Mill Complex  
AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER  
Mill Lane, Kimberton  
CITY, TOWN  
East Pikeland Township  
STATE  
Pennsylvania  
VICINITY OF  
5th  
COUNTY  
Chester  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
5th  
CODE

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	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<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"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
			<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME  
Multiple  
STREET & NUMBER  
CITY, TOWN  
STATE  
VICINITY OF

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.  
Chester County Court House  
STREET & NUMBER  
High Street  
CITY, TOWN  
West Chester  
STATE  
Penna., 19380

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE  
DATE  
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS  
CITY, TOWN  
STATE  
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This thriving 18-19th. & 20th. century mill complex at one time included acres, one grist mill, one up and down saw mill, cider mill, wheelwright shop and eight tenant houses as well as its miller's houses, (one 18th. century and one 19th. century), one barn and an assemblage of small farm buildings.

The oldest house on the complex is the 18th. century house. Local legend says it is the oldest house in Kimberton. Of plastered field stone, it originally faced southwest. Today the opposite side, facing northeast, is used as the main entrance. It is a two story and attic structure, three bays wide and two bays deep. A door is in the center bay on both the southwest and the northeast sides. There is a small 4-lite transom over the south door and a 3-lite transom over the north door.

The roof is a simple gable with plain box cornice and no returns. A large stone chimney caps the northwest gable at its apex while an equally large chimney rests just off center at the northeast gable end. Windows are mostly 6/6 with those on the second floor being smaller than the first floor windows. Attic windows are small 2/2's. The first floor windows facing southwest have been changed to 2/2 to meet a later fashion.

An early 2-story addition, also in plastered stone, is attached to the southeast wall. The addition is two bays wide and one bay deep with a door in the second bay where it joins the main house. The addition extends the house by half its original length. Its roof line is lower than the main roof of the house. There is a casement window at the second floor level on the north exposure.

A gable roofed porch over the door of the addition, added after 1940, runs at a right angle to the house. The east wall of this addition has a large stone chimney rising through the apex of its gable roof. A root cellar is close to the house on the northwest corner. An early bake house or summer kitchen to the east of this addition has been enlarged into a garage/storage area and connected to the house. The large fireplace remains, showing where the oven has been closed in the rear wall.

Inside walls of the main section are plastered planks with no studding to make partitions. Rafters, now covered with pine boards, were at one time exposed, being beaded and finished. The original flooring is on the second floor and one room of the first floor.

The 19th. century miller's house stands to the west of the original house. It is a 3-1/2 story mid-Victorian structure built in 1878. Facing southwest, it is five bays wide on this side (4 bays at the rear) and four bays deep. Windows are tall 2/2's being nearly floor to ceiling in height. The first floor ceilings are 10 feet high. The windows are capped with a graceful semi-elliptical curve and have louvered shutters on the inside. A pointed Gothic window is in the gable of the east & west exposures. The roof is supported by decorative sawed supports to a wide overhang.

The main entrance is a tall double door, with transom, in the center bay. It opens into a gracious hall with bannistered stairway rising to the

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attic. On the east exposure there is a door in the third bay, opening on-  
to the porch which runs across the entire front and east side of the house.

There is a one story addition to the rear of the house intended to be,  
and presently used as, a kitchen. This addition is recessed behind the  
main east and west walls of the house making a natural niche for a shed  
roofed porch to the east. There may have been a similar porch to the west  
since there also was a door on that side at one time.

The barn stands between, and above, the two houses. Constructed of  
stone, lightly plastered, it has a frame forebay to the south and a stone  
lean-to on the east wall. There is a long addition attached to the forebay  
on the west exposure and intended as a horse barn. A high wall encloses  
the remainder of the barnyard.

East of the barn there is a cistern constructed of heavy field stone  
and mortar which was at one time covered with earth. It is rectangular  
at the base and has a vaulted roof of stone with an opening in the top.  
It is 18' long and 10' wide. Water flowed by gravity from a spring across  
the meadow below the mill into a larger cistern by the east side of the  
mill. From the cistern by the mill a ram, and later a gasoline engine,  
pumped the water to the cistern high above on Seven Stars Road. From  
this smaller cistern water flowed by gravity to both houses and the barn.  
This system was in use as late as 1945.

The mill lay below these two houses and almost directly in front of  
the barn. The natural slope of the land is such that the ground level  
at the barn looks into the third floor level of the mill. The mill is  
almost square, about 36'x36', being three bays wide on all exposures.  
As late as 1957, the east exposure was covered with a frame two story  
lean-to. The north exposure would seem to have been the front being  
along Mill Lane. It is three stories high at this side with a door in  
the middle bay of each floor.

To the west, the arrangement is the same but the gable roof limits  
this exposure to two floors. There is one dormer in the roof. The  
ground continues to drop away toward the creek on the south exposure  
creating a lower, or basement, level and the appearance of four floors.  
There are two openings at the first level, three each at the second and  
third, two at the fourth, and one in the gable.

The east wall held the two-story lean-to which covered a 22' <sup>diam.</sup> water  
wheel. The original wheel was smaller; however, as the mill increased  
in size, so did the wheel, eventually being an iron wheel 4 or 5 feet  
wide with wooden buckets.

The mill race began at Kimberton Dam on Pughtown Road and flowed to-

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ward Christman's Mill in the village of Kimberton near The Bear Tavern. There it joined other spring waters and ran through the meadow in the center of the village in a northwardly path to the mill pond southeast of Prizer's Mill. This hand dug race is still clearly visible. From the mill pond, the race paralleled Mill Lane to the northeast corner of the mill and there was diverted by a stone wall at a right angle over the wheel. From the wheel, it flowed under the mill and out at the southwest corner to meet the normal path of the pond overflow and stream. A cable on piers and pulleys travelled from this mill down stream, rising overhead as it crossed Mill Lane, to power a saw mill and wheelwright shop.

Windows, doors, the wheel, and the lean-to are gone from this structure but the roof remains in fair repair. Stairways are still firm and beams are still strong. Flooring is missing in various places. A growth of young underbrush is crowding up to and in to the vacant doorways and windows.

A small gabled stone and frame barn stands to the west of the mill. The 2-story stone end is two bays wide and one bay deep with rude stalls on the ground level. The upper level is continued northward in wood and fronts on Mill Lane.

The remnants of a small square Victorian carriage house remains in the center of the two houses, the mill and the big barn. It was originally two stories high with one bay on each side. Of frame construction, it had intricate sawed trim which hung like icicles from the eaves. A hip roof was drawn together into a belfry and spire at the top.

Four or five of the eight early tenant houses once associated with this complex have been sold as individual residences and are occupied today. The others have vanished from the scene. Also gone from sight is the cider mill, the ice house near the junction of Royal Spring Creek and French Creek, the saw mill just beyond, and the wheelwright shop.

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

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The eighteenth century found East Pikeland Township a busy place and the crossroad at the sign of The Bear was a hub of activity. As barges up the Schuylkill River deposited more new families each week and a crosscurrent of merchantmen travelled from settlements east of the Schuylkill to the great valley and villages along the new turnpike west, the need for flour and bread grew almost faster than the supply.

To meet these needs, a grist mill was hastily built just south of the Vincent River (French Creek) where a strong, pure, spring-fed creek called Royal Spring flows into it - a natural spot for a mill with lots of rise to the land and drop to the water. Several other wheels up the narrow valley towards Yellow Springs were already turning by the constant force of water from this excellent stream.

The first mill at the confluence was small and only one story high. The miller lived in a stone house on the bank above the mill. He spent part of his days at the Mill and part clearing land and planting crops. Soon his needs built a saw mill, then a wheelwright shop, and a cider mill. He planted an orchard east of his house where the prevailing winds would lift the leaves and keep his trees insect free. The mill prospered as the century turned and upper floors were added. A larger wheel was installed. He enlarged his house.

By mid-nineteenth century, a new owner was making drastic changes. Prosperity was in the air. A huge iron wheel, gasoline engines, and a cable to drive other wheels kept a rhythmic hum from dawn to dusk. By 1878, the miller, Benjamin Prizer, was quite able to build a capacious new house full of space, airy and bright. He added extra touches to the grounds such as the carriage house and built terraces and walls.

Then came the bad years, depression and economic restraint. A new owner, Reiff, poured in fresh energy. He called it "Kimberton Mills". But the mill finally ceased operations in the early 1920's. However, J. Clarke Dunmore bought it, repaired the broken pond wall, and restored the mill to operating condition.

Nevertheless, the small milling operation was a doomed enterprise. As the second World War came and went, America's instinctive drive toward bigger and bigger operations spiralled. But the real competition for the small mill was the advent of truck mounted grinding machines. The mill

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went to the farmer rather than the farmer to the mill. In 1954, J. C. Dunmore closed its doors. The big wheel was sold to a purchaser in New Jersey; the pond became a favorite for neighborhood youngsters both summer and winter, then finally broke completely and drained; the cable driven offshoots of the mill had long since fallen into disrepair and decay; and the final insult was the desecration by vandals of windows and doors and bits and pieces, valueless by themselves, which were carried away. Because its roof remains, it stands today as a monument, scarred but undaunted, to the ability of man to meet his challenges and survive.

See continuation sheet.

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

UTM REFERENCES

A 

ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING					

C 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

B 

ZONE		EASTING				NORTHING					

D 

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Located in East Pikeland Township, just east of the East Vincent Township line and bounded by Seven Stars Road on the northeast, Hares Hill Road on the southeast, Mill Lane and township lands on the southwest, and lot #134 on the northwest. Being numbers 135, 136 and 139 on the East Pikeland Township tax map. (1970)

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

Mary Busenkil, Estelle Cremers for

July 29, 1977

ORGANIZATION

DATE

The French & Pickering Creeks Conservation Trust

469-6287

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

Coventryville, R. D. 2, Pottstown, Penna., 19464

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

**12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

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



# MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet.

## GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 4 E 18 450 970 4443 010  
 UTM REFERENCES

A	1,8	4,5,1,0,0,0	4,4,4,3,1,2,0	B	1,8	4,5,1,2,3,0	4,4,4,2,96,0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	1,8	4,5,1,2,0,0	4,4,4,2,8,6,0	D	1,8	4,5,1,0,6,0	4,4,4,2,9,2,0

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STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*William J. Wewer*

TITLE WILLIAM J. WEWER, Executive Director  
 Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Comm.

DATE 1-16-78

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

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER