

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 of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name Miller's House at Spring Mill

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number North Lane and Hector Street

city, town Conshohocken (Whitemarsh Township)

N/A not for publication

state PA

code PA

county Montgomery

code 091

N/A vicinity

zip code 19428

3. Classification

Ownership of Property

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

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

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>1</u>	_____ buildings
_____	_____ sites
_____	_____ structures
_____	_____ objects
<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this 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 meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official _____

Date _____

State or Federal agency and bureau _____

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.
- determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other, (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____

Date of Action _____

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/single dwelling

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)
work in progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

COLONIAL/Georgian

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone

walls stone

roof metal

other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Miller's House at Spring Mill is two and 1/2 story, gneiss stone dwelling with a gable roof. Built in two sections, the largest block is a 32' by 29' Georgian three bay section c. 1770 with a chimney on the north (non-gable) side. There is a four bay vernacular 33' by 21' addition c. 1820 on the west side with a chimney on the west gable end. The present house retains its 1820's Georgian vernacular appearance and reflects the wealth and style consciousness of a local merchant. The interior reveals both an unusual plan and incredible integrity. Vacant for over thirty years, the house remains in surprisingly good condition, with most architectural fabric intact. Some water and vandal damage occurred before the building was sealed.

The house was the residence for the miller/owner of the Spring Mill, Joseph Paul (1770-1805) and Thomas Livezey, Jr. (1783-1836). Livezey was co-owner from 1783-1805, and Paul's nephew. After Livezey's death, the mill was operated by members of the Frankenfield family for three generations. In 1935, they stopped grinding in the mill, but continued to use it as a feed store. The last resident of the Miller's House was Carl Frankenfield who left in the 1950's. The gambrel roofed grist mill, which had been adjacent to this house across North Lane, existed from the 1700's until it was destroyed by fire in 1967 (see photograph #1).

The main facade of the Miller's House at Spring Mill faces south and sits 200 feet from the edge of the Schuylkill River on North Lane. It is adjacent to Conshohocken to the east, in an area known as Spring Mill which derives its name from the original spring fed mill. The property now sits on a third of an acre. To the north and west are modern industrial buildings, to the south is the Spring Mill railroad station.

The uncut gneiss stone walls of the house have large, flat stones set on edge at the corners of the building which enhance the quoins effect. Not as thick as true corner stones, the decorative stones were an attempt to produce a more stylish appearance. The south facade of the main c.1770 section retains the historic scored stucco finish used to simulate an ashlar stone facade (photograph #3). The east end of the house has smooth finish stucco. The rest of the house has flat ridge pointing. Both sections of the house have boxed eaves with cyma reversa fascia and rake molding. Current metal roofs have been placed over the original wooden shingles in both sections. The main section has a standing seam tin roof. The addition

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has pressed sheetmetal roofing.

An eight panel door, with matching raised panels in the door recess, is centered on the south facade of the 1770 section. The original sash in this section of the house was 12/12 on the first floor, 8/12 on the second floor and 6/6 on the third floor. Some of the sash has been replaced with 2/2. The original three panel shutters for the first floor hang on forged offset strap hinges set on pintles driven into the window frames. The front step is a large granite slab placed on loosely set rubble stones with granite steps. Cellar window wells have stone lintels with square wrought iron horizontal bars with tapered round ends.

The scored stucco finish wraps around the west end of the c. 1770 section of the building to the junction of the western addition. There is a bulkhead on this end of the main building. It has granite steps and jambs that are notched to recess the door and door battens. The doors (missing) had been hung with strap hinges on pintles set into the granite jambs. One pintle and one hinge are intact. There are 6/6 windows located at the third floor and between the first and second floors. There is also a four glass fixed sash just below the peak of the roof.

The south facade of the addition has two exterior doors (photograph #4). A vertical batten, divided ("Dutch") door leads into the kitchen area and remains in excellent condition with original strap hinges. The thresholds for all exterior doors are marble. A 16" square opening in the stonework is to the east of the "Dutch" door and below the threshold level. This opening has a stone lintel and vertical wrought iron bars. A bulkhead with a timber lintel had been under the center window on this facade. It has been infilled with stone. The door adjacent to the 1770 section is deteriorated. The remnants indicate a six panel type door with the top two panels replaced by glazing. The step to this door is half of a mill stone. The window sash in this addition was 6/9 on both floors. Some of the original sash remains, although most is broken.

The west facade (photograph #5) has a single 4/2 window in the garret. A 4"x10" U-shaped stone drain protrudes through the wall near the southwest corner of the building approximately two feet from ground level. This unusual feature is one stone that has had the trough cut into it. It relates to an interior stone sink beside the fireplace which will be discussed with the interior.

The northern facade of the addition (photograph #6) has a batten, divided door located off-center, but directly across from the matching door on the south facade. The fenestration is asymmetrical with three windows on each floor, but the middle windows are not aligned; the eastern window on the first floor and the middle window on the second floor are slightly smaller than the other three windows.

The northern facade of the c.1770 section has a symmetrical two bay arrangement with the chimney located between the windows on the northern wall.

The eastern end of the c. 1770 section (photograph #7) is stuccoed with a smooth finish. There is a late 19th century doorway located toward the northern corner which has a three panel (two vertical, one horizontal) door,

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applied molding and four lite glazing. There is one window with 6/9 sash on the second floor directly above the doorway, 6/6 sash in the window on the third floor, and four lite fixed sash in the window in the garret.

Interior

The floorplan of the main section of the house is a unique adaptation of a side passage, double-pile plan where it is common to have the entrance into the end of a lateral hall perpendicular to the direction of the roof ridge and then paired rooms front and back, with the chimney on the gable end or centered on the ridge. The orientation of the plan in the Miller's House at Spring Mill is transversed, with the main entrance in the middle of the long hall and the chimney in the center of the back wall. There are no known examples of this type of floorplan variation in the Philadelphia region.

Upon entrance into the main hall (photograph 8), the choices for proceeding include going directly into the formal parlor located in the northeastern side of the house, proceeding westward into the second parlor, passing into the addition, or ascending the main staircase. A former doorway into an eastern section now removed, has been closed off with cupboard doors added on the bottom. This eastern entrance into the foyer was never the main entrance. The doorway is not as large or detailed as the center front door.

The main feature of the two parlors is corner fireplaces. The more formal eastern parlor fireplace originally had a fully panelled mantelpiece (photograph #9). Although removed by a prior owner, a clear profile of the crown molding is evident on the plaster of the adjoining wall as well as shadows of the paneling configuration left on the rough coat plaster face. The hearth in this parlor is marble and the face of the firebox appears to have been marble, as revealed by impressions in the plaster and metal hooks in the plaster to hold the slabs.

The mantelpiece on the fireplace in the western parlor has two projecting shelves at each end of the mantleshelf with crossetted corners on the molding below (photograph #10). The hearth in this room is brick. The stove grate in the fireplace is an original installation of a "Pantheon pattern hob grate" (Eveleigh, 1983). This is a cast iron unit built into the fireplace that was used to improve the efficiency of burning coal (Eveleigh, 1983 and Shuffrey, 1912). The cast iron facade includes jambs decorated with pineapples and square "hobs" with palmetto and urn designs. Four horizontal bars connect the two sides and create the basket for the coal. The grill in which the coal would have burned is missing. The stone lintel of the grate has a beaded edge. Hob grates were very common in England in the later half of the eighteenth century. This example was probably imported. Surviving examples are rare.

Built-in corner cupboards have been removed from both parlors leaving traces of the shelves and molding profiles on the plaster. The five inch wide chairrailing found on the first floor is consistent throughout the second floor, as well as in the stairway between the two floors. Six inch

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wide double architraves, doors with ovolo framework encasing six raised panels hung with HL hinges (H behind architrave), beaded washboard and random width pine flooring are consistent throughout this section of the house. The window returns on the first floor are solid wooden panels. On the second floor the window returns are plastered with a plain flush board which meets the window casing at the outside corner of the plaster.

The stairway has closed string stairs, a square newel post and a banister with turned tapered spindles. The newel post motif is carried up the stairs with sections meeting the railing in the corners and at landing levels (photograph #11). There is a single triangular raised panel on the side of the stairway on the first floor. Under the stairs is a vertical board wall which hides the batten cellar door and contains a door which leads into the addition. There are only two entrances into the addition, both on the first floor. There is no access to the addition on the second floor.

The floorplan and details on the second and third floors of the c. 1770 main section are similar to those on the first floor, repeating the east-west hallway. Two large rooms are directly above the first floor rooms and on the second floor share the chimney for two more corner fireplaces. Both fireplaces have 5 1/2" square brick hearth. The mantelpiece in the northeastern room of the second floor is identical to the mantelpiece in the western room of the first floor (photograph #12). The mantelpiece in the western room of the second floor has simpler detailing, using the same molding but without crosssetted corners and the mantleshelf is shallow without projections. This room has had a board partition installed, but the original molding was not cut (photograph #13).

On the second floor, the large hallway of the first floor plan is divided into two small rooms. The one at the top of the stairs retains original details of a storage room. There is a double row of beaded pegboard around the perimeter of the room containing turned pegs. There is built-in shelving in one corner. The other room has been recently used as a bathroom, but with no damage to architectural details (photograph #14).

On the third floor, the size of the two main rooms and hallway is diminished by the slope of the roof (photographs #15 and 16). The rafters of the section of the house which had previously been to the east of the c. 1770 section can be seen in the east end wall (photograph #17). The western end wall of that building became the eastern end wall of the present building. The former interior walls now a stuccoed exterior wall. That building had been removed at least by the time of the c. 1900 photograph.

The rafters, perkins and collar ties are original with a half dovetail lap joint between the collar ties and rafters, the perkins inset into the rafters.

The c.1820 addition has two rooms on each of the two floors divided by a stairway and vertical batten walls. The kitchen, located at the western end of the addition, has a large walk-in fireplace with a smoke shelf, socket for a crane, shelf in the right jamb, and an infilled opening in the rear wall for a bakeoven door (photograph #18). To the left of the fireplace are built-in shelves with batten doors over the remnants of a

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stone sink. A two inch thick marble slab is let into the side jamb of the fireplace and the adjacent exterior walls forming a square sink. The large stone was cracked to install a modern sink which used the original drain through the exterior west wall. To the right of the fireplace are floor to ceiling built-in shelves. The ceiling in the kitchen has exposed chamfered beams. A beaded board wall separates the two rooms on the first floor and encloses the staircase. The interior doors in this section have six quirked ovolo panels and framework. The interior door hardware includes Norfork-type thumb latches and butt hinges. The baseboard is a single beaded board.

The other room on the first floor has a built-in cupboard in the wall adjoining the c. 1770 section with beaded batten doors hung on HL hinges (photograph #19). This room has two doors leading into the c.1770 section, one into the western parlor and one leading either into the foyer or down to the cellar.

The room above the kitchen has a small offset fireplace with a very simple mantleshef supported by two ogee brackets (photograph #21). There are closets on both sides of the fireplace built beside the chimney breast. The closet on the left has beaded batten double doors, a bench and a pegboard. The closet on the right has a single beaded batten door with three built-in shelves.

A hallway (photograph #22) connects the two rooms on the second floor and provides access to the attic stairs. Embedded in the eastern end wall of the garret of the addition are three inch long ends of purlins (photograph #23). These remnants indicate the roof line of a structure which had been on the western end of the c. 1770 section when it was first built. This structure had a steeper roofline than the present addition and was completely removed before the construction of this addition.

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)
Architecture

Period of Significance
1770-1820

Significant Dates
1770
1820

Cultural Affiliation
n/a

Significant Person
N/A

Architect/Builder
unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The architectural significance of the Miller's House at Spring Mill lies in the highly unusual transversed Georgian floorplan of the c. 1770 section and the architectural integrity of the entire building. Representative of a modest but stylish "mansion", the Miller's House contains many of the usual Georgian features presented in variation to the normal form in plan. The presence of an original hob grate in a parlor fireplace is an uncommon feature and is indicative both of the original attempt to present a stylish house and the current level of integrity. Never renovated, the building presents a prime example of an 18th century middle class vernacular house built to accommodate the owner of the mill for which the area was named.

A transversed Georgian plan with the chimney on the non-gable side has no known precedent in this area. The "single" houses of Charleston, South Carolina have fireplaces on the non-gable side of the house, but they are not corner fireplaces and they are divided by a center hall. In comparison with published examples of residences in the Delaware Valley, the "Wiltown Hickman Plank House" in East Goshen Township, Chester County (Schiffer, 1976, p. 105) is the only other house located with corner fireplaces and a chimney located on a non-gable wall. This c. 1800 15'x25' plank construction house has been disassembled by the township and is presently in storage. Other local published or publicly open Georgian houses either follow a center hall plan, or if there are corner fireplaces, they are located on a gable end.

Originally the property included over 513 acres on both sides of the Schuylkill River. It became the center for the development of the community when David William established the mill and a thriving plantation after he purchased the property in 1697. Road docket and David William's will indicate that he lived on the property and the mill was in operation at least by 1704. Numerous local documents in the early 1700's refer to the Spring Mill as a reference point.

After David William's death in 1714, the property went to Rees Williams who sold it to Anthony Morris in 1730. Anthony Morris built the "Peter LeGaux Mansion" (National Register) for his son John. A Pennsylvania

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Gazette advertisement on July 11, 1734 indicates that John Morris leased out the mill. At this point, the miller was a hired hand and housing was provided in an early log house adjacent the mill. "As late as fifty years ago (1852) there was still standing a log addition on the side next to the mill - probably the first shelter built for the William family in 1697." (Payne, p. 48.)

In 1769 John Morris sold the entire property to Joseph Potts, his son-in-law and son of John Potts of Pottsgrove, proprietor of several area businesses, including Valley Forge. A year later Joseph Potts divided the property; the LeGaux Mansion tract was sold to George Mifflin and the mill tract to Joseph's brother John Potts, Jr. At this point the mill tract included 30 acres with the mill in Whitmarsh Township and 21 acres across the river in Merion Township. Nine months later, in December of 1770, John Potts, Jr. sold the mill tract to his nephew Joseph Paul.

The present house must have been built about this time for Joseph Paul. Subsequent tax lists indicate that Paul lived on the property and was assessed for a dwelling in addition to the mill. Joseph Paul shared a half interest in the mill with his brother-in-law Thomas Livezey. This half interest was officially transferred to Thomas Jr. in 1783. After Joseph Paul's death in 1805, Thomas Livezey, Jr. purchased the Paul interest on the mill tract and remained the sole owner until his death in 1830.

The earliest description of the buildings on the Spring Mill property is provided by the Federal Direct Tax of 1798. At that time there was a two story stone dwelling 30 feet by 30 feet with six windows of 24 lights (12/12) and four windows of 20 lights (8/12). A one story stone kitchen 20 feet by 24 feet adjoined in the back which had three windows of four lights. This description corresponds to the present c. 1770 section and the addition which had been attached in the east side, but since demolished.

The western addition must have been built between 1798 and 1830. A newspaper advertisement in the Norristown Register (November 17, 1830) to sell the property describes the house with two additions. The advertisement states that the Mansion House residence of the Thomas Livezey was "stone, two stories high, has one centre building, 31 by 29 feet, two wings, one 25 1/2 by 21 feet, and the other 33 by 21 feet, the whole having an entry, 4 rooms and 2 kitchens on the lower floor, and 7 rooms on the second, with well finished garrets, divided into chambers, and cellars under the whole."

This description corresponds very closely to the present structures measurements and fits the present room arrangement if the eastern addition had the same room arrangement as the western addition, i.e. a kitchen and one room on the first floor and two rooms on the second floor.

A general description of the house is found in "The Genealogy of the Maulsby Family from 1699 to 1902" (Cora M. Payne, Des Moines: G.A. Miller Press, 1902, p. 48). The author states:

"The house at Spring Mill possesses almost as much interest as the old mill, but unfortunately no date stone is found in either building. The house is built of stone with frame work pinned with wooden pegs, and is roomy and comfortable. The kitchen is entered by a low Dutch door, whose two parts have

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now been nailed together, but at the opposite side of the room you can still gaze out of the upper half door, which opens as in ancient times. The ceiling is very low and the windows filled with small panes of glass. Beside the wide fireplace that occupies almost an entire side of the room is a great dark marble slab forming a square sink, with opening through the outer wall, and the doorsteps are of marble from a nearby quarry."

In assessing the importance of the Miller's House at Spring Mill it is important to look at two other local properties, the LeGaux Mansion and the Samuel Livezey House and Store (Plymouth Meeting National Historic District). Both of these properties provide a basis for comparison architecturally and are related historically.

The LeGaux Mansion, part of the mill property until 1770, was the residence for the owner of the mill during a period when the owner was an upper class proprietor, but not the actual miller. The social shift to the miller as a merchant came during the ownership of Paul and Livezey. Although they had hired help at the mill as well, Paul and Livezey were both millers by trade.

Architecturally, the LeGaux Mansion is a stately Georgian gambrel roof house which sits uphill, diagonally across North Lane and Hector Street approximately 750 feet from the Miller's House. The five bay coursed stone building has a center hall plan with four rooms on each floor. Back-to-back fireplaces are served by two separate chimneys on each side of the house. The point of a comparison of the two houses is not to suggest their similarity, but to indicate that when the Miller's House was built, the LeGaux Mansion was a prime upper class model to follow. That model was not followed in plan, but was followed in the presentation of a Georgian facade.

The Samuel Livezey House and Store in Plymouth Meeting was owned by the son of Thomas Livezey, co-owner of the Spring Mill. A family history (Smith, p. 80) indicated that Samuel had a store in a smokehouse building at Spring Mill, but his health was affected by the dust generated at the mill. He subsequently moved his store to Plymouth Meeting. The house there was added on to at that time to create a Georgian facade with a scored stucco finish. The resulting plan of the Samuel Livezey House is a center hall with additions to the side and back. Its present restored appearance is comparable to the Miller's House in its size, scale, style and representation of social standing. The main differences in the Samuel and Thomas Livezey houses are the very characteristics that make the Thomas Livezey (Miller's) house unique - the transversed Georgian plan and the overall integrity.

see continuation sheet

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 # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository: Historical Society of Montgomery County

10. Geographical Data

Acres of property 0.4 acre

UTM References

A: 18 Zone 475550 Easting 4436000 Northing
 C: _____

B: _____ Zone _____ Easting _____ Northing
 D: _____

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at the point on the title in the west edge of North Lane; said point beginning at the distance of 226.86 feet, South 24 degrees, 14 minutes East from the intersection of North Lane and Hector Street; along North Lane South 24 degrees, 14 minutes East, 119.64 feet; South 53 degrees, 37 minutes West, 121.87 feet to a spike; North 37 degrees, 23 minutes West, 121.87 feet; North 37 degrees, 23 minutes West, 116.50 feet; North 52 degrees, 37 minutes East 149.09 feet to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The boundaries of the nominated site include the house and all surrounding ground historically associated with the property that had not been previously subdivided or developed.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Ella Aderman
 organization Architectural Restoration Services date July 25, 1989
 street & number 1818 Keystone Drive telephone 215-822-8256
 city or town Hatfield, PA zip code 19440

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- Montgomery County (PA) Recorder of deeds, deed books 72-552, 55-438, 52-88, 23-29
- Philadelphia County (PA) Recorder of deeds, deed books D8-56, D8-60, I12-58, I12-60, G1-37, F15-144
- Montgomery County (PA) Recorder of Wills, #4103, #5006
- Whitemarsh Township tax lists, 1785-1830, Historical Society of Montgomery County
- Whitemarsh Township tax lists, 1769-1781, (microfilm - held by Historical Society of Montgomery County)
- Whitemarsh Township tax list, Federal Direct Tax 1798, (microfilm - held by Historical Society of Montgomery County)
- Cora M. Payne, The Genealogy of the Maulsby Family, (Des Moines: G.A. Miller Press, 1902), p.48.
- Norristown Register (Norristown, PA), November 17, 1830.
- Margaret Berwind Schiffer, Survey of Chester County, PA, Architecture, (Exton, PA: Schiffer Publishing Ltd, 1976), p. 102, 105-6.
- David J. Eveleigh, Firegrates and Kitchen Ranges, (Aylesbury, Bucks, UK: Shire Publications, 1983), p. 4-8.
- L.A. Shuffrey, The English Fireplace and Its Accessories, (London: B.T. Batsford, 1912), p. 210.
- Addison, Edward T., Jr. , "The History of Spring Mill Plantation", (unpublished, 1980, copy provided by author, 404 North Swedesford Road, North Wales, PA)
- Charles Harper Smith, The Livezey Family, Historical Society of Montgomery County, p. 76.
- Dr. Robert C. Moon, The Morris Family of Philadelphia, (Philadelphia, 1908), Volume I, p. 250.
- Dr. Mary Hough and Henry Ferris, The Hallowell-Paul Family, (Philadelphia, 1924), p. 62.

