

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
REGISTRATION FORM**

**1. Name of Property**

historic name Codorus Forge and Furnace Historic District

other name/site number: Hellem (Hellam) Forge

**2. Location**

street & number: River Farm & Furnace Rds (N/A) not for publication

city, town: Hellam Township (N/A) vicinity

state: PA code: PA county: York code: 133 zip code: 17311

**3. Classification**

Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: district

Number of Resources within Property:

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
<u>4</u>	<u>—</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>—</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>—</u>	structures
<u>6</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
		TOTAL

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the  
National Register: 0

Name of related multiple property listing: Iron and Steel  
Resources in Pennsylvania 1716-1945

**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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.    See continuation sheet.

*Brent D. Glass*

*7/3/91*

Signature of certifying official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
Brent D. Glass Pennsylvania Historical & Museum Commission  
State or Federal agency and bureau

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 \_\_\_\_\_

**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 Keeper \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_  
of action

**6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions  
10 industry  
01 domestic

Subfunctions  
10A manufacturing facility  
01A single dwelling

Current functions  
98 vacant/not in use  
01 domestic

Subfunctions  
01A single dwelling

7. DescriptionArchitectural Classificationother: 99 iron furnaceMaterials

foundation	<u>N/A</u>	roof	<u>N/A</u>
walls	<u>limestone 43</u>	other	<u>N/A</u>

Describe present and historic appearance:X see continuation sheet8. Statement of Significance

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

   Nationally    X Statewide       Locally

Applicable National Register Criteria: A, C, DCriteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: 160 industry  
110 engineering  
023 archaeology-historic-non aboriginal  
030 architecture

Period(s) of Significance: 1765-1850Significant Dates: 1765, 1800, 1836Years of Alterations: N/ASignificant Person(s): N/ACultural Affiliation: N/AArchitect/Builder: unknown

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

X See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical ReferencesX See continuation sheetPrevious 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 # \_\_\_\_\_Primary location of additional data:X State Historic Preservation Office   Other state agency   Federal agency   Local government   University   Other - Specify Repository: \_\_\_\_\_10. Geographical DataAcreage of property: 7 acres

UTM References: York Haven

	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>		<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
A	18	358640	4434580	C			
B				D			

   see continuation sheetVerbal Boundary DescriptionX see continuation sheetBoundary JustificationX see continuation sheet11. Form Prepared Byname/title Diane B. Reed, Historic Preservation Specialistorganization PHMC/BHP date March 14, 1991street & number P.O. Box 1026 telephone (717)787-8045city or town Harrisburg state PA zip 17108

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Codorus Forge & Furnace HD

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The Codorus Forge and Furnace complex is located in Hellam Township in York County on the south bank of the Codorus Creek, approximately one mile southwest of its confluence with the Susquehanna River. The complex lies in the narrow valley of the creek. On the north bank is a precipitous cliff, and on the south bank the ground slopes up more gradually. The historic district is located on the south side of the creek. It includes the ironmaster's house and outbuildings on the south side of Furnace Road, and on the north side of the road, along the south bank of Codorus Creek, are the substantial remains of the forge building, what may have been an ore roaster, and races adjacent to the forge. There are several other ruins southwest of the forge, along the road, but the original functions of those buildings are unknown. (For National Park Service counting purposes, the nominated property has been counted as one contributing site. Individual foundations or remains were not separately counted.)

The furnace is approximately one eighth of a mile from the mansion and forge, connected to the mansion by an abandoned road running halfway up the hill from Furnace Road, and parallel to it. The furnace itself is between the abandoned road and Furnace Road. Above the furnace is the base of the charging ramp and the ruined walls of the charcoal house.

Codorus shows excellent integrity as a district, in that many of the elements of the iron plantation are still in existence, the furnace, forge, ironmaster's house, and the ruins of the charcoal house and workers' houses suggest the original configuration of the plantation.

The major components of the historic district are (see attached map for corresponding locations):

1. furnace c. 1836

The furnace, approximately 30 feet square at the base, is constructed of stone, with a square base approximately 12 feet in height. At that point, the furnace becomes round, and tapers to its full height of 30 feet. Near the top of the furnace structure are two iron bands. On top of the furnace is a brick hot blast stove, which retains some of its original piping.

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2. charcoal house c. 1836

Only the partial walls of the charcoal house are still standing. The stone walls remain from a structure which was 80 feet long, and 40 feet deep. The end walls are substantially intact, and the south wall is partially intact.

3. ruins of workers houses c. 1836

All that remains of the workers houses are the remnants of low stone foundations, approximately 20' square.

4. ironmaster's house and furnace office c. 1780

The ironmaster's house is a two and a half story stuccoed stone structure nine bays wide and one room deep. They are three entrance doors on the front (north) elevation. The house may have been built in as many as three stages. The roof has four dormers. Sashes on the first floor of the front facade are nine over six, and the remaining sashes are six over six. A separate two story building, which may have housed the kitchen, sits at a right angle to the main house, on its northeast corner. It is attached to the house by a one story porch. To the east of the house is a nineteenth century frame privy with a hipped roof. A cement block shed on the south side of the house is 20th. century.

5. privy

The privy is nineteenth century, clapboard with a hip roof. The building is about 8' square. It is considered an accessory to the ironmaster's house and is not counted as a separate building.

6. ruins of unknown structures

There are several foundations for unknown buildings on the north side of the road. One is a low stone foundation and sits just below the road in deteriorated condition. It is approximately 20' square. The other building ruin is located at grade level with the road, the foundation built into the slope below. The building was destroyed by fire in 1989, although the fireplace and chimney are still standing, and some of the post and beam framing.

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The forge building is a stone and frame structure which sits in the flood plain below Furnace Rd., north of the ironmaster's house, on the south bank of Codorus Creek. Although a forge constructed at Codorus in 1765, it is more likely that this is the bloomery forge which constructed in 1800. The building is 58' long and 45' wide. The walls are masonry up to the roof line, with a post and beam roof structure, and clapboard gable ends. The gables and roof framing appear to have been replaced in the late 19th. century. Because of the nature of the activity in the building, the destruction of the wooden elements of the building by fire would not be surprising.

8. ruin of unknown structure

This structure is solid masonry, with what appears to be a type of hearth on the southwest elevation. It is approximately 25' by 20'. Its original function is unknown. One possibility is that it was an iron ore roaster related to the forge, since it is located less than 50' from that building. It is apparently this structure which gave rise to the speculation that there was a furnace at Codorus in 1765. However, it is clear that whatever it is, it is not an iron furnace.

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Codorus Forge and Furnace, an iron plantation, is nominated under Criterion A for its significance in the area of industry. Codorus represents one of the earliest ironmaking endeavors in central Pennsylvania. Following the tendency to locate near water courses, the furnace is one of a number that were established along the Susquehanna from the eighteenth into the mid nineteenth century. These ironmaking enterprises were also sited to take advantage of the Susquehanna as a transportation mode, and subsequently the canal and railroad, which were located on the east bank of the river, and to regional ore banks such as Cornwall and Chestnut Hill. Codorus is also nominated under Criterion C for engineering. The design of the furnace at Codorus is unusual and of exceptional quality. Round furnaces were unusual, and few have survived. The round configuration does not affect the operation of the furnace, rather is a well-preserved example of the craft of the mason. The furnace is also exceptional for the integrity of its hot blast apparatus. The Codorus Forge and Furnace District is also significant under Criterion C. Its forge building is a rare survivor of its type. Although forge buildings were associated with many iron furnaces, only a handful have survived. Codorus Forge retains its walls, with arched openings and the watercourses associated with the forge. In addition, the ironmaster's house/office are well preserved examples of vernacular architecture. Codorus is also nominated under Criterion D for archaeology because of the information it may yield about the manufacture and working of iron over an extended period of time. There is excellent potential at the site because of the absence of subsequent disturbance, particularly at the furnace and the forge site. The forge and furnace have definite potential for providing information about the types of products which were produced at Codorus. The substantial remains of the forge can also provide information about the scale and layout of the forge. The area around the foundations of the worker's houses and the ironmaster's house may also have potential to provide information about their lives.



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The Codorus Forge and Furnace complex had its origins in 1765, when William Bennett erected Hellam (Hellem) Forge on Codorus Creek. Bennett held the property until 1771, when he fell on hard times, and the forge was sold at sheriff's sale to Charles Hamilton. Hamilton quickly transferred the property to the Hon. James Smith of York, who was a signer of the Declaration of Independence. During the Revolutionary War, the works produced cannons and cannon balls for the Continental Army. However, Smith did not fare any better financially than his predecessors with the forge, losing about \$25,000. This he attributed to his managers, "one of which was a knave, and the other a fool."

On April 16, 1778, while the Continental Congress was in session in York, Smith sold the property to Thomas Niel. Niel operated the forge until about 1800, adding a bloomery, and increasing the forge landholdings from around 1500 acres in 1793 to 3275 acres in 1800. About this time Samuel Iago became the owner of the property, and held it until 1810, when it was purchased by Henry Grubb, who renamed it the Codorus Forge. In 1836 Grubb had a furnace built a short distance from the forge. Prior to that time, pig iron had been brought to the forge from other furnaces, notably Cornwall.

There has been speculation that there was an earlier furnace associated with the forge. However, records from the forge 1802-1809 do not indicate any workers who performed furnace-related tasks. From contemporary letters it appears that the pig iron was ferried across the Susquehanna on flatboats. The ore for the new furnace came from the Chestnut Hill Mines, also owned by the Grubbs, which were located in Lancaster County. By 1850 the furnace had ceased operation. The focus of central Pennsylvania ironmaking had moved across the river to the more modern anthracite fueled furnaces which had been built between Marietta and Wrightsville, and which were located more favorably to the canal and railroad. Codorus remained in the Grubb family until 1859, when it was sold at sheriff's sale.

The ironmaster's house has subsequently been used as a residence. The furnace is owned by the Conservation Society of York County and maintained as an historic site.

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Bining, Arthur C. Pennsylvania Iron Manufacture in the Eighteenth Century. Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1973.

Hellam/Codorus Forge Records, 1802-1812, ms. 253 Historical Society of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia.

Prowell, George R. History of York County. Chicago: J.H. Beers & Co., 1907.

Swank, James M. History of the Manufacture of Iron in All Ages. New York: Bert Franklin, 1964.

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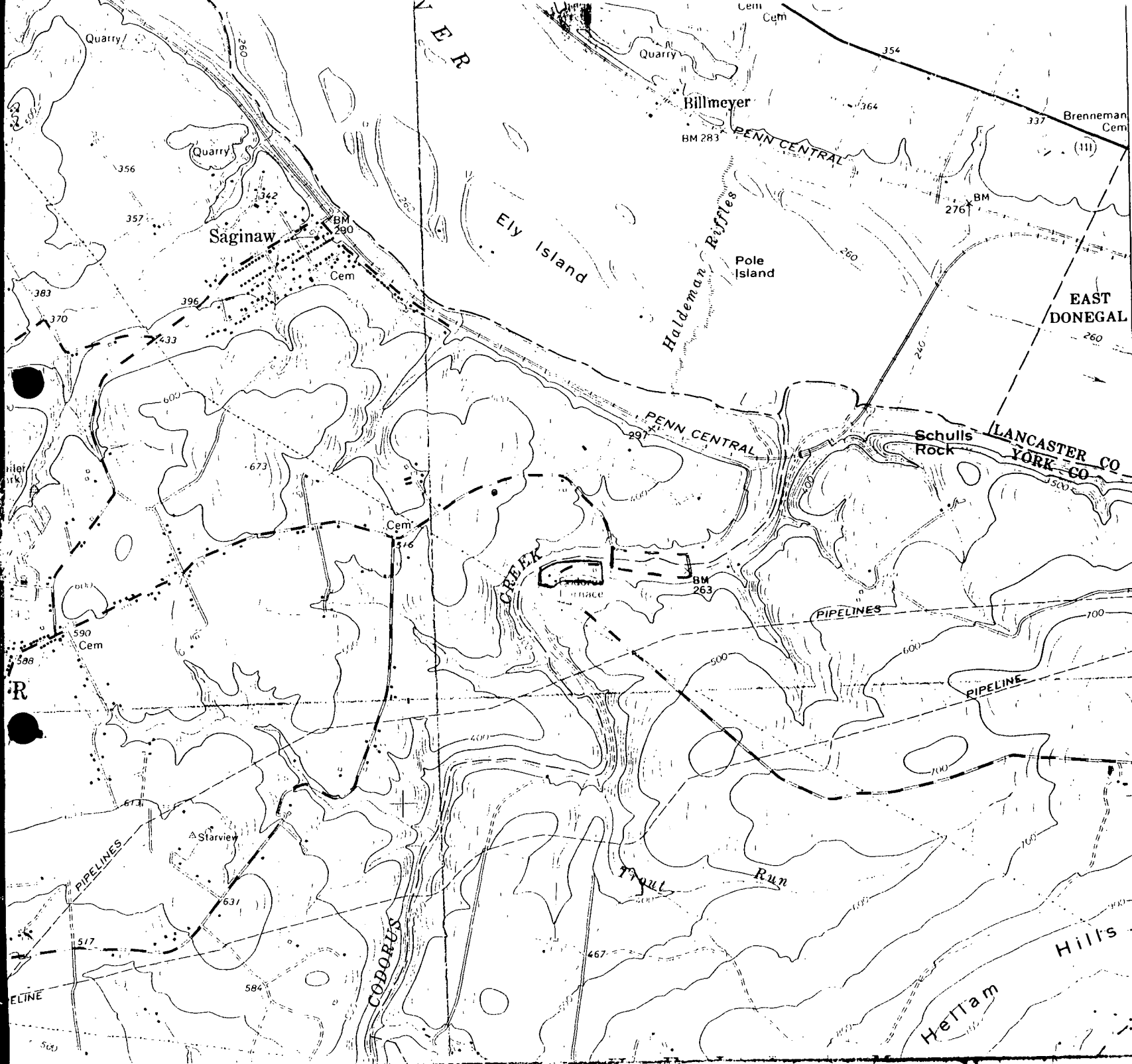
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Verbal boundary description: The nominated district begins at a point on the north side of Furnace Rd., 200' from the bridge crossing the Codorus Creek, thence south 400' to a point, thence west along the 320' contour 800' to a point, thence northwest 250' to Furnace Rd., thence north 250' to the south bank of the Codorus Creek, thence along said creek 1000' to a point, thence south 250' to the point of beginning along Furnace Rd.

Boundary justification: The nominated district includes all structures and remains associated with Codorus Forge and Furnace. There are no other structures or known remains located outside the boundaries. The bank barn south of the ironmaster's house is not included because it does not relate to the period of significance of the district.



CODORUS FORGE &  
 FURNACE HISTORIC  
 DISTRICT  
 YORK COUNTY  
 YORK HAVEN  
 ZONE 18  
 E 358640  
 N 4434580

(COLUMBIA WEST)  
 5664 II SE

HIGHMOUNT; 2.5 MI.

2'30"

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