

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

1. Name of Property

historic name Mary Ann Furnace Historic District

other name/site number: Trexler's Furnace

2. Location

street & number: Centennial Rd. (N/A) not for publication

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

state: PA code: _____ county: Berks code: 011 zip code: 19539

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: private

Category of Property: district

Number of Resources within Property:

<u>Contributing</u>	<u>Noncontributing</u>	
<u>5</u>	<u>—</u>	buildings
<u>1</u>	<u>—</u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u>—</u>	structures
<u>—</u>	<u>1</u>	objects
<u>7</u>	<u>1</u>	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 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 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

Current functions

98 vacant/not in use

01 domestic

Subfunctions

10A manufacturing facility

01B multiple dwelling

Subfunctions

01B multiple dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

other: 99 iron furnace

Materials

foundation	<u>40 stone</u>	roof	<u>45 slate</u>
walls	<u>43 limestone</u>	other	<u>N/A</u>

Describe present and historic appearance:

X see continuation sheet

8. 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

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions): N/A

Areas of Significance: 160 industry
030 architecture

Period(s) of Significance: 1789-1869

Significant Dates: 1789

Years of Alterations: N/A

Significant Person(s): N/A

Cultural Affiliation: N/A

Architect/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:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other state agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other - Specify Repository: _____

10. Geographical DataAcreage of property: 9 acres

UTM References: Manatawny

	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>		<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
A	18	445040	4481540	C			
B				D			

___ see continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary DescriptionX see continuation sheetBoundary JustificationX see continuation sheet11. Form Prepared Byname/title Diane B. Reed, Historic Preservation Specialistorganization PHMC/BHP date March 13, 1991street & number P.O. Box 1026 telephone (717)787-8045city or town Harrisburg state PA zip 17108

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 1Mary Ann Furnace H.D.

Mary Ann Furnace Historic District is located on Centennial and Mary Ann Roads in Longswamp Township, south of the village of Lower Longswamp, eight miles west of Trexlertown. The district lies on either side of the Little Lehigh Creek. With the exception of a wooded area on the banks of the creek, the area is largely open fields. The manager's house/office, charcoal house, and blacksmith shop sit on a slight hill which slopes east down to the creek. The district is remarkably intact, with no intrusions except a historical marker erected in the 1920s. With the exception of some interior remodeling in the manager's house, the standing buildings show remarkable integrity. There may have been other worker's houses during the late eighteenth and the nineteenth century when the furnace was operating, and there certainly was a wheel pit/wheel house, as well as a casting shed, enough of the primary buildings which comprised the original plantation are still extant to provide a sense of the layout of the complex. However, the potential for archaeological resources would appear to be limited, due to extensive road work and associated filling in the triangle surrounding the furnace area, as well as subsequent farming activities.

The district includes the following resources (numbers correspond to their map location):

1. iron furnace stack (site) 1789

This iron furnace was originally constructed in 1789, and is described as being thirty feet high with a bosh of seven feet. All that remains of the furnace is the collapsed stack. None of the corners of the stack are intact, and the rubble has fallen outside the original area, so it is difficult to know the exact size of the base.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

Mary Ann Furnace HD

2. historical marker - non contributing 1924

This granite historical marker was erected by the Historical Society of Berks County in 1924, and reads:

"Mary Ann Furnace
(Trexler Furnace)
erected 1789 by
Jacob Leshar
operated by
Jacob Leshar 1789-1808
Reuben Trexler (son in law) 1808-1837
Horatio Trexler (son) 1837-1869
1924 Historical Society Berks County 16.

3. barn c. 1830-1860

This bank barn has stuccoed stone end walls with vertical board sided frame gables and vertical board siding on the sides. On the east facade there are four single windows evenly spaced on the first level above the bank, two single doors, and a double door in the middle. On the second level there is a triple window. This facade includes decorative hex signs, and painted arches over the doors and windows.

4. manager's house and office c. 1830-1860

This is a two story stone home, five bays wide and two bays deep. The manager's house is a good example of vernacular architecture, with nicely Federal type entrance frontispieces with reeded pilasters, carved tracery motif and rosettes on the frieze. The furnace office building, also of stone, is adjacent to the northeast corner of the house and is a one and a half story building built into the bank, two bays wide and one bay deep. There are doors on both the first floor and the basement. The building has a relatively intact interior, including its original fireplace.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 7 Page 3Mary Ann Furnace HD5. blacksmith shop 1854

The blacksmith shop is a rectangular stone building, one story, with crude quoins. The date 1854 is inscribed on the building. The base of the forge is still located in the northeast corner of the building.

6. charcoal house c. 1850

The charcoal house is stone with a frame gable on the north end. The roof is of queen post construction. On the south end of the building is a section which has a low wall and is half frame. This appears to be of a later, undetermined date.

7. stone dam

Although this dam has been breached, sections of both sides are intact, and the outline of the pond it contained is still clearly visible adjacent to stone house (#8).

8. house c. 1830-1850

This small house is stone covered with stucco. A shed dormer was added the length of the northwest side of the house at a later period. Although this is supposed to have been a worker's house for the furnace, its original use has not been clearly established.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 8 Page 1 Mary Ann Furnace H.D.

Mary Ann Furnace is nominated under Criterion A, for its association with the early establishment of the iron industry in eastern Pennsylvania. The Mary Ann Furnace complex is a good example of the modest iron plantations established along eastern creeks and streams. Despite the ruined condition of the furnace stack and dam breast, the extant blacksmith shop, charcoal house, worker's house, manager's house/office and bank barn provide a significant indication of the original layout of the plantation. The original buildings demonstrate good integrity, with only minor alterations. Mary Ann is also eligible under Criterion C for its architectural resources. The manager's house is a good example of vernacular architecture, with Federal style entrance frontispieces with reeded pilasters, carved tracery motif and rosettes on the frieze. The barn is a reasonably intact example of a bank barn, with good decorative elements. The blacksmith shop, common to most furnaces, is rarely found in as original condition. The charcoal house and worker's house also show good integrity.

Mary Ann Furnace was erected in 1789 by Jacob Leshner. The furnace construction may have been encouraged by the passage of the protective tariff in the Pennsylvania Assembly in 1785. Leshner operated the furnace until 1808 when it became the property of his son-in-law, Reuben Trexler, who owned it until 1837. In 1828 Trexler employed 30 men, who listed 210 dependents. He also owned 25 horses. That year they made 420 pigs and 85 castings. Reuben Trexler's son, Horatio, ran the furnace from 1837 until its demise in 1869. The nearby village of Longswamp was built by the furnace owners, including the elegant Georgian home of Jacob Leshner.

Many stoves were cast at the furnace, and c. 1820 the first anthracite stoves in Pennsylvania were made there by Reuben Trexler. The stoves are reported to have been cast in "open sand". The so-called "Lehigh Coal Stove" was made at the furnace until 1857. The furnace finally closed in 1869. Whether it operated until the supply of wood for charcoal was exhausted, or whether economic conditions after the Civil War forced its closing is unknown. However, after that date the property was converted to agricultural use, since the land which had been cleared was excellent farm land. It is still being farmed presently.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 1 Mary Ann Furnace H.D.

Bining, Arthur. Pennsylvania Iron Manufacture in the Eighteenth Century. Harrisburg: Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, 1938.

D'Invilliers, E.V. The Geology of the South Mountain Belt of Berks County. Harrisburg: Board of Commissioners for the Geological Survey, 1883.

Mercer, Henry C. The Bible in Iron. Doylestown: Bucks County Historical Society, 1961.

Montgomery, Morton. History of Berks County in Pennsylvania. 1886. Philadelphia: Everts, Peck and Richards, 1975.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

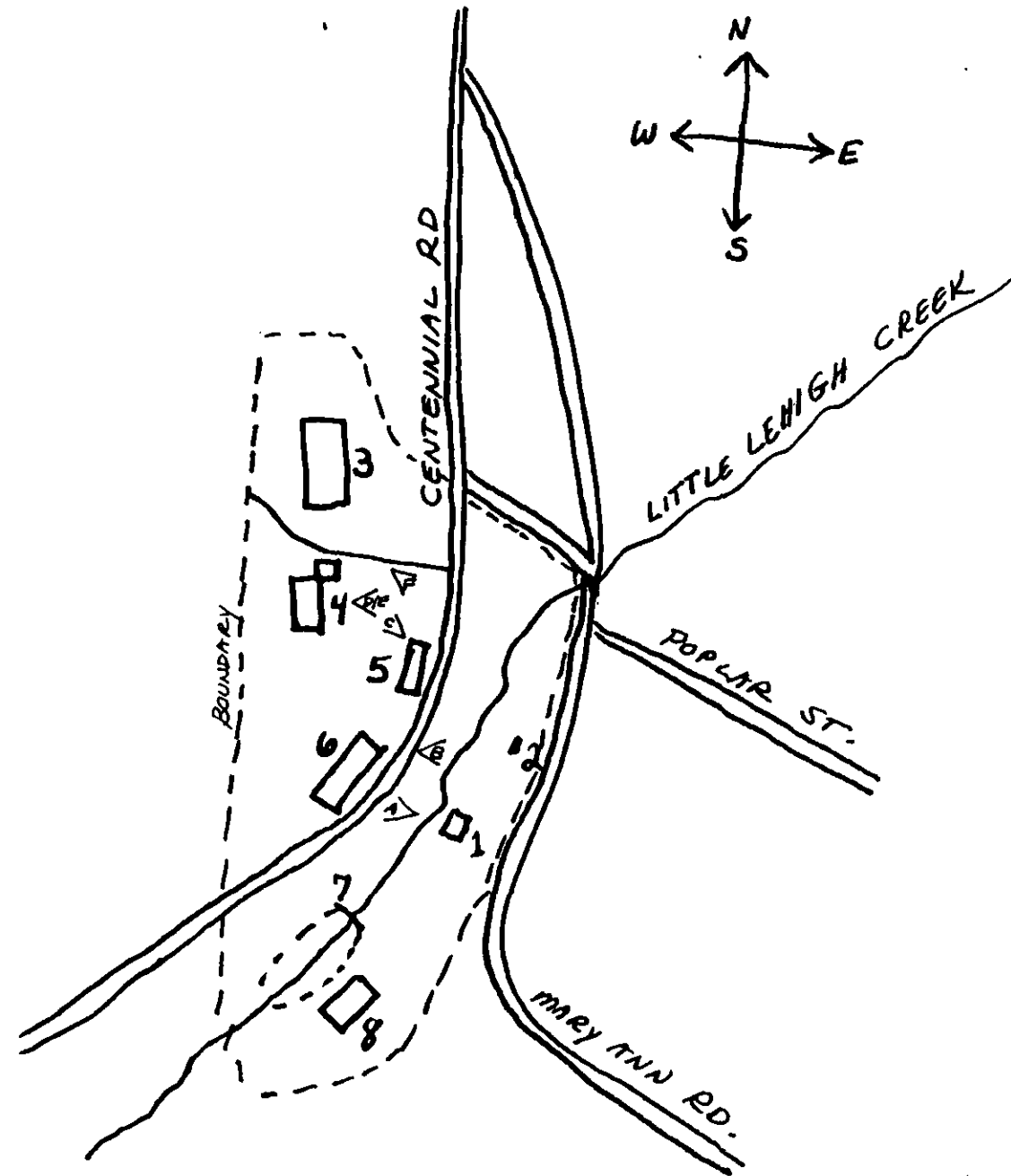
**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 1

Mary Ann Furnace H.D.

Verbal boundary description: The Mary Ann Furnace Historic District begins at the intersection of Centennial Rd. and an unnamed cross road which connects it with Mary Ann Rd. It runs approximately 200' along the south side of said road, thence south 400' along Mary Ann Rd. thence southwest approximately 400' just beyond the worker's house, thence north 220' to Centennial Rd., continuing north from said road 800' to a point behind the bank barn, thence 500' southeast to the point of beginning.

Boundary justification: The nominated district includes all structures associated with the Mary Ann Furnace, with the exception of the Lesher Mansion, which is located approximately one-half mile distant in the village of Lower Longswamp. While that home is related to the furnace, it is not an integral part of the furnace complex. With this consideration, and its distance from the furnace, it is not included in this nomination.



MARY ANN FURNACE HISTORIC DISTRICT

1. iron furnace stack ruins
2. stone historical marker
3. barn
4. manager's house and office
5. blacksmith shop
6. charcoal house
7. stone dam
8. house

← PHOTO VIEW

MANATAWNY QUADRANGLE
 PENNSYLVANIA—BERKS CO.
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

5885 11 SE
 (ALLEN TOWN WEST)

