

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

1. Name of Property

historic name Wharton Furnace

other name/site number: N/A

2. Location

street & number: Wharton Furnace/Hull Rd(N/A) not for publication

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

state: PA code: PA county: Fayette code: 051 zip code: 15445

3. Classification

Ownership of Property: public - State

Category of Property: site

Number of Resources within Property:

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

7. Description

Architectural Classification

other: 99 iron furnace

Materials

foundation	<u>N/A</u>	roof	<u>N/A</u>
walls	<u>40 stone</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
engineering

Period(s) of Significance: 1837-1872

Significant Dates: 1837

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:X State Historic Preservation Office Other state agency Federal agency Local government University Other - Specify Repository: _____10. Geographical DataAcreage of property: 1 acre

UTM References: Brownfield

	<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>		<u>Zone</u>	<u>Easting</u>	<u>Northing</u>
A	17	616540	4409080	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/BHPdate March 19, 1991street & number P.O. Box 1026telephone (717)787-8045city or town Harrisburgstate PA zip 17108

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Wharton Furnace is situated approximately six miles east of Uniontown on Chaney Run, 1.8 miles south of the old National Road at the intersection of Wharton Furnace Rd. and Hull Rd. The furnace is located on the edge of, and is part of the Forbes State Forest. The area immediately adjacent to the furnace stack is maintained as a grassy park, while the surrounding area is principally wooded.

The furnace is situated between Chaney Run and a low hill which was used as the head of the charging ramp. The furnace, constructed of stone, is 33 feet wide, 31 feet deep, and is approximately 31 feet high. The north elevation, where the casting floor was located, has a corbeled arch. On the south elevation there is a small rectangular tuyere arch. On the east elevation is a corbeled arch infilled with firebrick, associated ashlar wheel pit and raceway; associated stone foundations and curved stone wall above the race. On the charging bench are a series of stone pyramids that may have formed the foundation for the charcoal house.

An original photograph shows the hot blast apparatus located on the north elevation, surrounded by a stone enclosure. The hot blast stove is clearly visible, as is the hot blast apparatus surmounting the furnace. A vertical board charging house extends over the edge of the furnace top.

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The Wharton Furnace, is significant under Criterion A, in the area of industry, as a representative example of the westward expansion of the Pennsylvania iron industry. Fayette County was a significant regional ironmaking area, rivalling the Juniata Valley in production. Because of the cost of transportation from eastern iron producers, and the barrier of the Allegheny Mountains, western Pennsylvania, particularly Pittsburgh relied heavily on Fayette County, the Juniata Valley and other regional producers to provide iron for its rolling mills and foundries, prior to establishment of the Pittsburgh furnaces. Although its hot blast equipment is no longer extant, Wharton is also representative of many cold blast charcoal furnaces which were retrofitted for hot blast to improve their efficiency. Under Criterion C Wharton is significant as the best preserved iron furnace in Fayette County. The presence of the race, wheel pit, and wheel house foundations further enhance its importance.

Wharton Furnace was constructed in 1837 by Andrew Stewart, and placed in blast in 1839. Stewart rented the property to John D. Crea of Brownsville, and later to J. Ken(n)edy Duncan, who employed Alexander Clair as the furnace manager. The furnace went out of blast before 1850, and was still abandoned in 1855. However, the need for iron during the Civil War prompted the refurbishment of the furnace, and the works produced cannon balls for the Union Army. With no access to railroad or water transportation, the isolated furnace failed after the war, and was blown out by 1872.

The original operation was a cold blast charcoal furnace with one tuyere. However, an old photograph shows that the furnace was converted to hot blast, perhaps during its Civil War rejuvenation.

The Stewart family retained ownership of the property until the early twentieth century. Today the furnace is owned by the Department of Environmental Resources of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. In 1961 the furnace was restored by a coalition of the Fort Necessity Lions Club, the Western Pennsylvania Historical Society, and Myron Sharp.

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Bining, Arthur Cecil. "The Rise of Iron Manufacture in Western Pennsylvania." The Western Pennsylvania Historical Magazine. Vol. 16, no. 4, November 1933.

Ellis, Franklin. History of Fayette County Pennsylvania With Biographical Sketches. Philadelphia: L.H. Everts & Co., 1882.

Fort Necessity and Historic Shrines of the Redstone Country. Uniontown: Fort Necessity Chapter, Pennsylvania Society of the Sons of the American Revolution, 1932.

Thomas, William H. & Myron B. Sharp. A Guide to the Old Stone Blast Furnaces in Western Pennsylvania. Pittsburgh: The Historical Society of Western Pennsylvania, 1966.

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Wharton Furnace

Verbal Boundary Description: The nominated property begins at point A, where a power line crosses Wharton Furnace Rd., then proceeds along the southwest edge of said road 600' southeast to point B at its intersection with Hull Rd., thence southwest along the north side of Hull Rd., 400' to point C, thence northwest along a power line, approximately 450' to the point of beginning.

Boundary Justification: Although part of the larger Forbes State Forest, the part of the forest nominated includes only the furnace and related ruins. No remains of the complex have been identified outside the nominated area.

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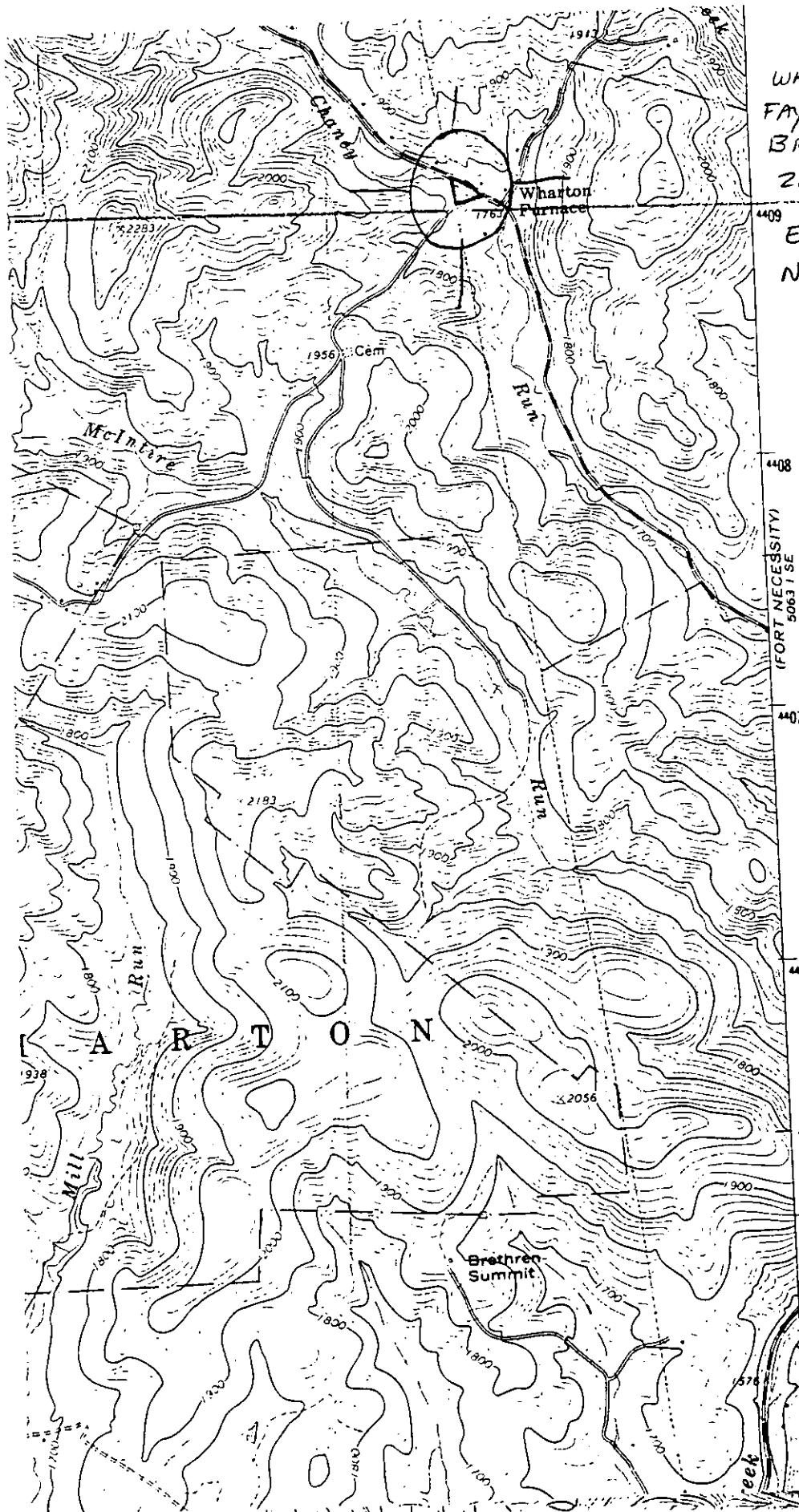
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All photos: Wharton Furnace
Wharton Furnace and Hull Rds., Wharton Township
Fayette County, PA
date of photographs: 2/6/1990
photographer: Diane B. Reed, PHMC/BHP
negatives: PHMC/BHP

photo key

- A. iron furnace stack and setting
camera points west
- B. iron furnace stack
camera points north
- C. iron furnace stack
camera points east



WHARTON FURNACE
FAYETTE COUNTY
BROWNFIELD
ZONE 17

E 616540
N 4409080

(FORT NECESSITY)
5063 I SE

47'30"

Hollow

E

Law
Cave