

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 Brobst Mill  
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number T 814  not for publication N/A  
city, town Albany Township  vicinity N/A  
state Pa code Pa county Berks code 011 zip code 19529

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>1</u>	<u>      </u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>      </u>	<u>      </u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> objects
			<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
Gristmills in Berks County

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)

Agriculture/Processing

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/ not in use**7. Description**Architectural Classification  
(enter categories from instructions)Other: gristmill

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stonewalls stonewoodroof tin

other \_\_\_\_\_

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Brobst (Probst) Mill is located in rural Albany Township at the foot of a hill known as the Pinnacle along Pine Creek. Access to the mill from township road T 814 is over a private lane and a small wooden bridge which crosses over Pine Creek. The two historic resources on the property are the wheel pit area of the raceway, and one contributing vernacular style building: a c 1780 2 1/2 story stone and log constructed mill. The historic resources have few changes that interfere with their ability to depict the significant time period.

The mill is 2 1/2 stories with no basement and measures 22' 6" by 33' 6". The stone foundation of the mill is 10' high, above ground and forms the first floor of the mill, the remainder of the mill is log construction. The building has been extensively repaired, replacing logs where necessary and repointing the stone. There are two doorways on the front or east facade, a dutch door on the first floor and a solid door on the second. The logs are squared and notched at the corners. The front facade has a standard 6/6 window on the first and attic levels, and two small 6 pane windows on the second level. There is a door on the south facade at the southwest corner. The roof is pressed tin segments with shingle shapes pressed into the surface.

As the first floor was altered for use as a butcher shop there is no early milling evidence on this floor. The second floor has the mill open floor plan. The joists for the attic floor are hand hewn and some are chamfered and have lamb's tongues. The joists are generally 8" high and 7" wide. The summer beam is hand hewn and runs the full length of the mill. The head room under the floor joist is about 6 1/2'. In the corner is the miller's office with a ceiling of tongue-and-groove wainscot. The walls are vertical random width beaded boards. The stairway to the attic is an open ladder type with rosehead nails on the treads.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park ServiceNational Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet

Brobst Mill

Section number 7 Page 2

The attic has a 4 1/2' knee wall. The rafters are on three foot centers. They are tapered, hand hewn and pegged at the ridge. The building on the interior is in good condition. There is no power transmission machinery left in the mill. However, there is evidence on the outside wall that there was a turbine drive and frame penstock. The only evidence for millstones apart from the four pieces built into the front wall is in the southwest corner, where there is attached to the underside of the floor joist of the attic a timber which would appear to be the location for the top of a stone crane. There is evidence in the attic floor of a cob crusher having been in this area.

The wheel pit area of the raceway to the rear of the mill, where the water wheel and later the turbine were located, is the only surviving portion of the watercourses that retains its stone retaining wall and is intact. The remaining portions of the head, tailrace and dam have lost their integrity, and are not included in the nominated property.

The exterior of the building has changed very little over the years and possesses good integrity. As far as can be determined, the only major change to the exterior of the building is the removal of the wooden shed to the rear of the building that protected the water wheel. The interior of the mill was converted to a butcher shop in the mid 1960's. The first floor has been altered with a concrete floor and large walk-in refrigeration locker installed. However, the second floor with its large open area and miller's office still retains the essential mill floor plan. Although all the milling equipment has been removed there is evidence of the location of a crane, machinery, etc. The historic resources retain the essential physical features that enables them to convey their past identity and character and to portray the significant time period c 1780 to 1939 the cut-off date for National Register eligibility.

**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

Industry

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Period of Significance

c 1780 to 1939

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Significant Dates

c 1780

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

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 Brobst Mill is significant under National Register Criteria A and C. The Brobst Mill is significant architecturally as the only remaining example of a log constructed mill in the Berks County Gristmill Survey. This mill was part of a thriving industrial complex and supplied flour to the workers and the residents of the area for 175 years.

The known prevalence of log houses in Berks County, according to the 1798 tax list, suggest there may have been many mills built partially or entirely of log. This mill is important as an example of a common type of 18th century construction which gradually lost favor and was replaced by other materials and methods of building.

This mill was part of a larger industrial site which included large tracts of land. The Brobst family were early settlers of Albany Township, having secured a patent from the Penns in the 1730's. The 1767 tax list shows Michael Brobst as being a miller. According to county historian Morton Montgomery (1886), a small charcoal furnace and two forges were built before 1780 on this property. These forges and furnace later became known as the Union Iron Works. The map of 1816 shows the property as being owned by Brobst.

The 1850 census of manufactures indicates the owner as being George Reagan, the mill having two pair of stones with a capital of \$1,200., processing 4,500 bushels of grain with a product value of \$2,200. One man operated the mill and earned \$11 a month. George Reagan was an Ironmaster from Virginia and in addition to operating the Iron works Reagan operated the gristmill, the sawmills and a general store.

See continuation sheet

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service****National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Brobst Mill

Section number 8 Page 2

In 1876 the owner of the mill was Thomas Long. Montgomery (1886) states, "that the furnace was abandoned fifty years ago and the forge ceased to work twenty years later, under the ownership of William Reagan. But the gristmill, built by Brobst over a hundred years ago, still remains. The lower story is of stone and the upper of logs. It is now the property of Thomas Long." The Long family owned the mill for many years, Herman Long operating the mill until his death in the early 1960's.

The mill ceased operating in the 1960's and it is now vacant. The present owners are restoring and preserving the mill which is the only known surviving structure from the once thriving iron works.

Initially, the mill was important for its function of supplying flour to the workers in the Brobst industries. Later after the iron industries discontinued operations the mill ground grain for the local farmers, becoming well known for the fine cornmeal it produced. For 175 years the mill served the people of this area and was an integral part of the economic life of the community.

**9. Major Bibliographical References**

Berks County Conservancy Multiple Property Nomination and Survey: Gristmills in Berks County, 1989

Morton L. Montgomery, History of Berks County in Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: Evert, Peck & Richards, 1886).

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:

\_\_\_\_\_ Berks County Conservancy \_\_\_\_\_

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of property Approximately 1/4 acre

UTM References

A 

1	1	8
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4	2	4	1	0	0
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4	4	9	7	1	0	0
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Zone      Easting      Northing

B 

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Zone      Easting      Northing

C 

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

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D 

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See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

**11. Form Prepared By**

name/title Louse Emery, Consultant date June 1990  
 organization Berks County Conservancy telephone 215-372-4992  
 street & number 960 Old Mill Road city or town Wyomissing, state PA zip code 19610

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 2

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Brobst Mill

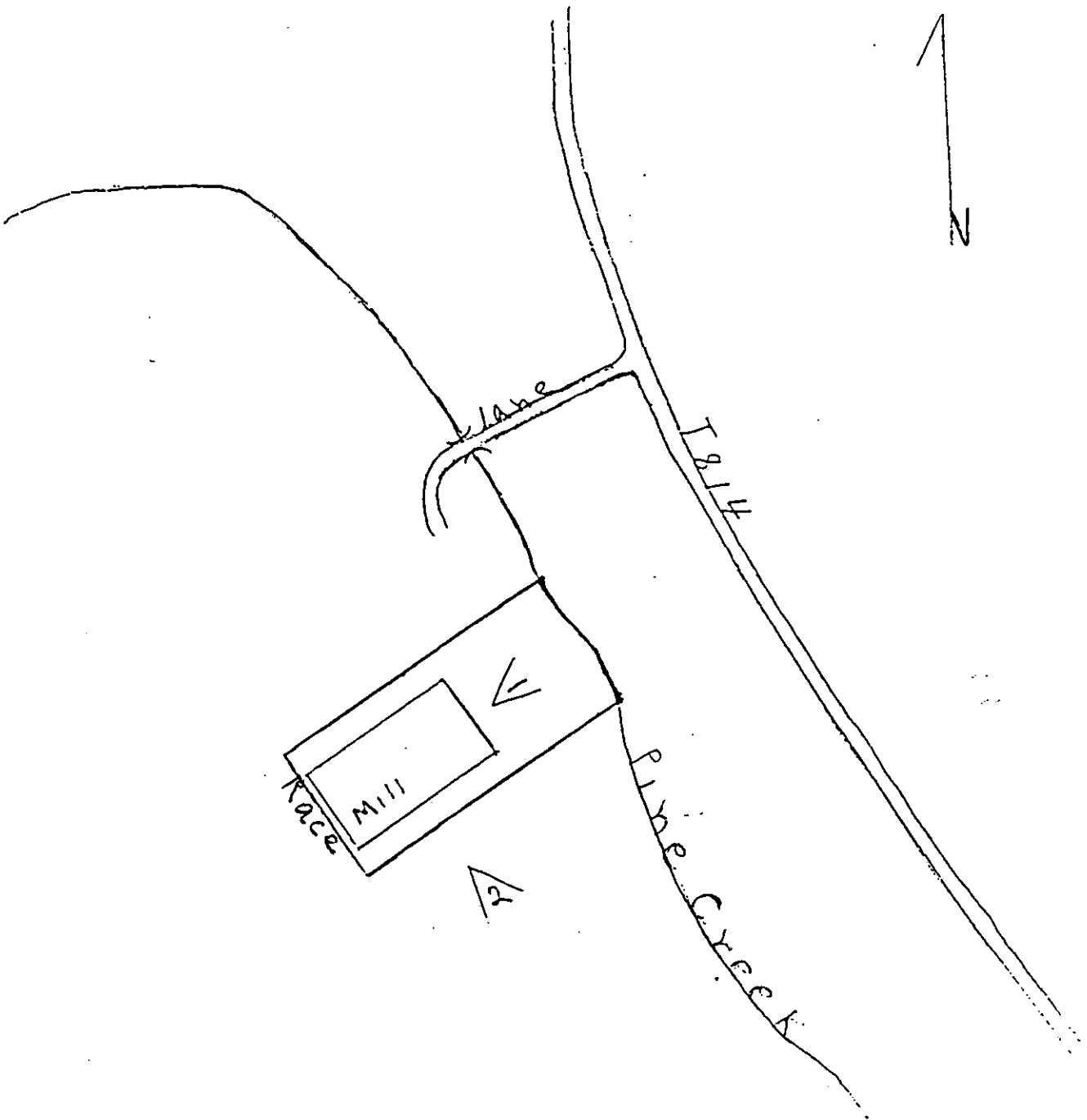
Verbal Boundary Description

Starting at a point ten feet from the northwest corner of the mill at the southwest edge of the mill race proceed southerly approximately 50 feet along the raceway, thence easterly approximately 100 feet to the creek, thence northerly 50 feet along the southwest bank of Pine Creek, thence westerly 100 feet to the place of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The boundary was drawn to include the mill building and the wheel pit area of the mill race immediately behind the mill. Other buildings on the property were excluded because they are of a later date than the mill whose significance is based upon its eighteenth century date and architecture. Excluded buildings include a farmhouse, barn and out buildings, all of frame construction. The water courses were not included, other than the wheel pit area, because of a lack of integrity.

BROBST MILL  
BERKS COUNTY, PA



Not to Scale

Key

\_\_\_\_\_ Boundry

< Photo Direction

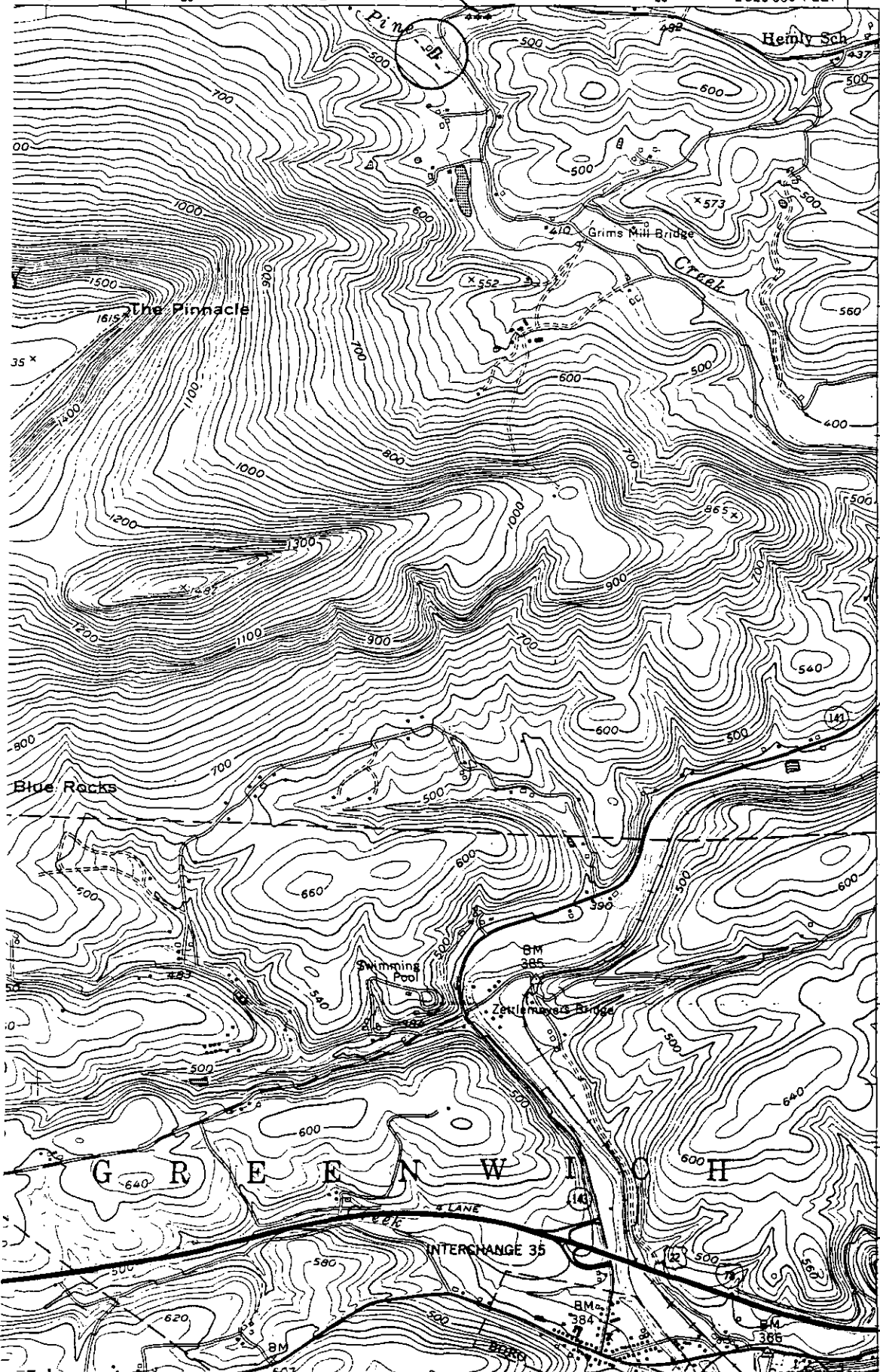


HAMBURG QUADRANGLE  
 PENNSYLVANIA—BERKS CO.  
 7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)  
 SW/4 HAMBURG 15' QUADRANGLE

5885 III NE  
 (NEW TRIPOLI)

DREHERSVILLE 7.5 MI.  
 ECKVILLE 3.4 MI.

425 2520 000 FEET 75°52'30"  
 40°37'30"



Brobst Mill  
 Berks County  
 Hamburg Quad  
 Zone 18  
 A 424100 4497100

Merkel Mill  
 Berks County  
 Hamburg Quad  
 Zone 18