

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 Thompson Mill
other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Golf Course Road not for publication N/A
city, town Robeson Township vicinity N/A
state Pa code Pa county Berks code 011 zip code 19508

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>3</u>	<u>2</u>	buildings
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u>1</u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u>4</u>	<u>2</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
 Domestic/single dwelling
 Agriculture/out building

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Vacant/not in use
 Domestic/single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

Other; gristmill
 Other; vernacular dwelling and
 agriculture outbuilding

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone
 walls stone
 asphalt
 roof asphalt
 other wood

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

The Thompson mill complex is located on Seidel's Creek on the outskirts of the village of Gibraltar in Robeson Township. The buildings are situated on gently rolling terrain with meadows along the creek. Originally the complex was part of a farm consisting of 125 acres but at present consists of 35 acres. The nominated property comprises approximately 6 acres. The four historic resources are the watercourses (races, pond and dam) and three contributing vernacular style buildings, a c 1816 banked 1 1/2 story plus basement frame and stone mill with frame additions, a c 1850 5 bay, 2 1/2 story stone farmhouse, a c 1850 stone outdoor bakeoven. The house and mill have gable asphalt shingle roofs. The two non-contributing buildings include a 1940's frame garage with vertical siding and a c 1950 sheep shed with frame vertical siding and a shed type tin roof. The contributing resources possess good integrity having few changes that interfere with their ability to portray the significant time period.

The c 1850 2 1/2 story vernacular farmhouse is two bays deep and has five windows on the upper level and four windows and a door on the first level of the front facade. There are gable end interior chimneys. The 2/2 windows have stone lintels and stone keystone arches. The house has an ell shaped frame addition with a shed type tin roof. A front porch was added at a later date. The c 1850 outdoor stone bakeoven adjacent to the house has a brick oven and chimney with a wood shingle roof.

The c 1816 mill is frame with a rough stone foundation, the walls have horizontal boards with beaded bottoms covered with asphalt shingles. The mill measures 36' by 54'. There are three frame additions to the west side, together they measure 36' by 100'. The mill has a shed on the east end that houses the water wheel. Much of the mill, including the additions, is covered with asphalt shingles. The additions were used for storage of grain, feed, grist, and bags. The mill retains the original 9/6 windows. The addition enclosing the west gable end preserved the framework and moldings of the bag hoist hood.

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

Thompson Mill

Section number 7 Page 2

Originally, the mill had an overshot water wheel. The power later was generated successively by a two head turbine, steam engine, and hit and miss gas engine. The present owner has installed an overshot steel water wheel.

The mill interior, while in only fair condition, retains many elements of early mill technology including the hurst frame with stone floor located midway between basement and first floor levels. There were originally three pair of millstones, none are now in place. Tentering is of the "bottle and beam" type with the nicely forged bray iron and wood lighter staff in place for the east pair of millstones, and those for the west pair elsewhere in the mill. There are nicely turned posts supporting the first floor and elegant - for a country mill - moldings on stair rails and hurst frame elements. The office is located on the level above the millstones. Much of the pin gear and flat belt power transmission, of wood construction, survives as does that of the internal and external bag hoist. It has an original "tub mill", a small stone milling platform used for small batches.

The water power system consists of a dam across Seidel Creek built with loose stone in a wooden breast. The pond behind the dam has been silted in but sufficient water is backed up by the dam to go into the race which has an earthen and stone breastwork. The owner has recently restored the race and has installed a modern steel waterwheel in the hopes of generating electricity.

The alterations and additions cited to the historic resources on this property do not interfere with their ability to depict the significant time period. The additions to the mill were part of the growth and change in the business over the years. The asphalt shingles covering much of the mill obscure architectural detail but help preserve the building. The house and bakeoven exhibit little exterior change although the original window sash in the house have been replaced. Over the years the various owners have altered and modernized the interior of the house leaving few original features. This complex retains the essential physical features that enable it to convey its past identity and character and portray the significant time period 1829 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 _____
Engineering _____

Period of Significance

~~1829-1939~~
1816

Significant Dates

~~1829-~~
1816

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 Thompson Mill complex is significant under National Register Criteria A,C and D. This property is significant for its association with the county gristmill industry being representative of a pattern of mills which were part of family farms; the property has been connected to the milling industry of the county for over one hundred years. The mill retains early architectural details and elements of early mill technology and therefore increases our knowledge of milling history.

A mill is shown as operating at this site on the map of 1816. The owner of the mill on the 1850 census was Henry Thompson, the mill having a capital of \$2,500., processing 9,030 bushels of wheat and rye with a product value of \$7,534. One man was employed and earned \$20.00 a month. On the 1854 map there is a tanyard, which no longer exists, listed along with the gristmill. H. Thompson is the owner of the mill in 1862. M. Kirilin is shown as the owner on the 1876 map. The last miller was Herbert "Herb" Collins who operated the mill between 1905 and 1950.

The mill provides evidence of early milling technology which includes the early hurst frame with stone floor located midway between basement and first floor levels and the "bottle and beam" tentering with the forged bray iron and wood lighter staff. This evidence of an earlier technology increases our knowledge of milling history and contributes to our understanding of milling operations in general.

Although many of the exterior construction details of the mill are obscured by the asphalt shingles the interior structural elements and architectural details are visible and intact. The nicely turned posts and elegant moldings indicate the builder wanted more than mere utility for his mill. To find these details in a country mill is unusual. The Thompson Mill is one of twelve surviving frame mills found in the Berks County Gristmill Survey.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Thompson Mill

Section number 8 Page 2

The Weidner, Griesemer/Brown, Thompson and Geiger mill complexes illustrate an interesting finding of the survey: the majority of early mills surveyed were part of working farms. The building functions on these properties were, therefore, inter-related - the mill, house and outbuildings serving the mill and farm. The house in the Thompson complex was the home of the miller for many years. Additionally, the contributing buildings have been part of the property since their construction. These factors give the buildings historical associations to each other and to the milling industry.

As this mill, house and bakeoven were part of a working farm, the miller/farmer not only raised his grain but ground it as well. From an early date this mill served the farmers of the area grinding their grain into flour and processing feed for their animals. The mill operated for over 100 years, the last miller "Herb" Collins conducting the mill for 45 years.

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

Acres of property Approximately 6 acres

UTM References

A	118	426	4610	44	58	5510
	Zone	Easting		Northing		
C	118	426	6810	44	58	6310

B	118	426	6810	44	58	81210
	Zone	Easting		Northing		
D						

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Louise 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 ServiceNational Register of Historic Places
Continuation SheetSection number 10 Page 2

Thompson Mill

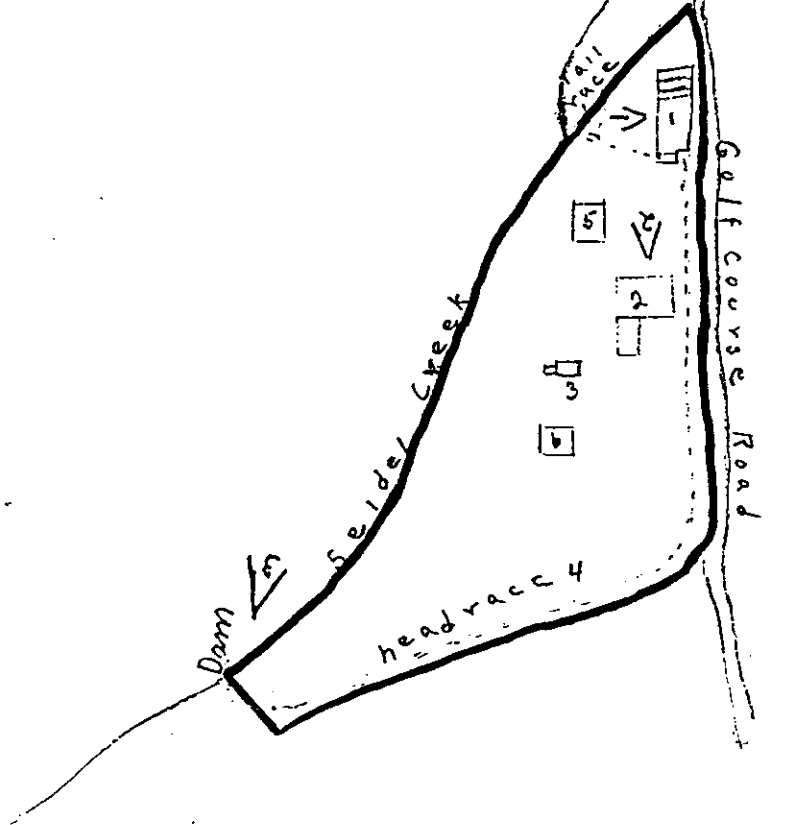
Verbal Boundary Description

Starting at the southeast corner of the mill at Golf Course Road proceed south along the western edge of Golf Course Road approximately 500' to the mill dam, thence northwesterly 100' or less along the west edge of the earth and stone dam to the main overflow area, thence northerly along the southeast bank of Seidel Creek and contour line approximately 1200' to the west edge of Golf Course Road, thence south approximately 200' to place of beginning.

Boundary Justification

The boundary was drawn to include the contributing buildings and structures, the mill, farm;house, bakoven and water courses. The boundaries are delineated principally by the road, head race, dam and creek. Excluded from the noinated property is the frame bank barn east of the house, across the road. This Boilding was not directly associated with the mill and lacked distinction or significance. Other land surrounding the mill property is open farmland. A small one room schoolhouse is licated north of the tract along Golf Course Road.

THOMSPON MILL
BERKS COUNTY, PA



1. Gristmill
2. Farmhouse
3. Bakeoven
4. Watercourses
5. Non-contributing Garage
6. Non-contributing sheep shed

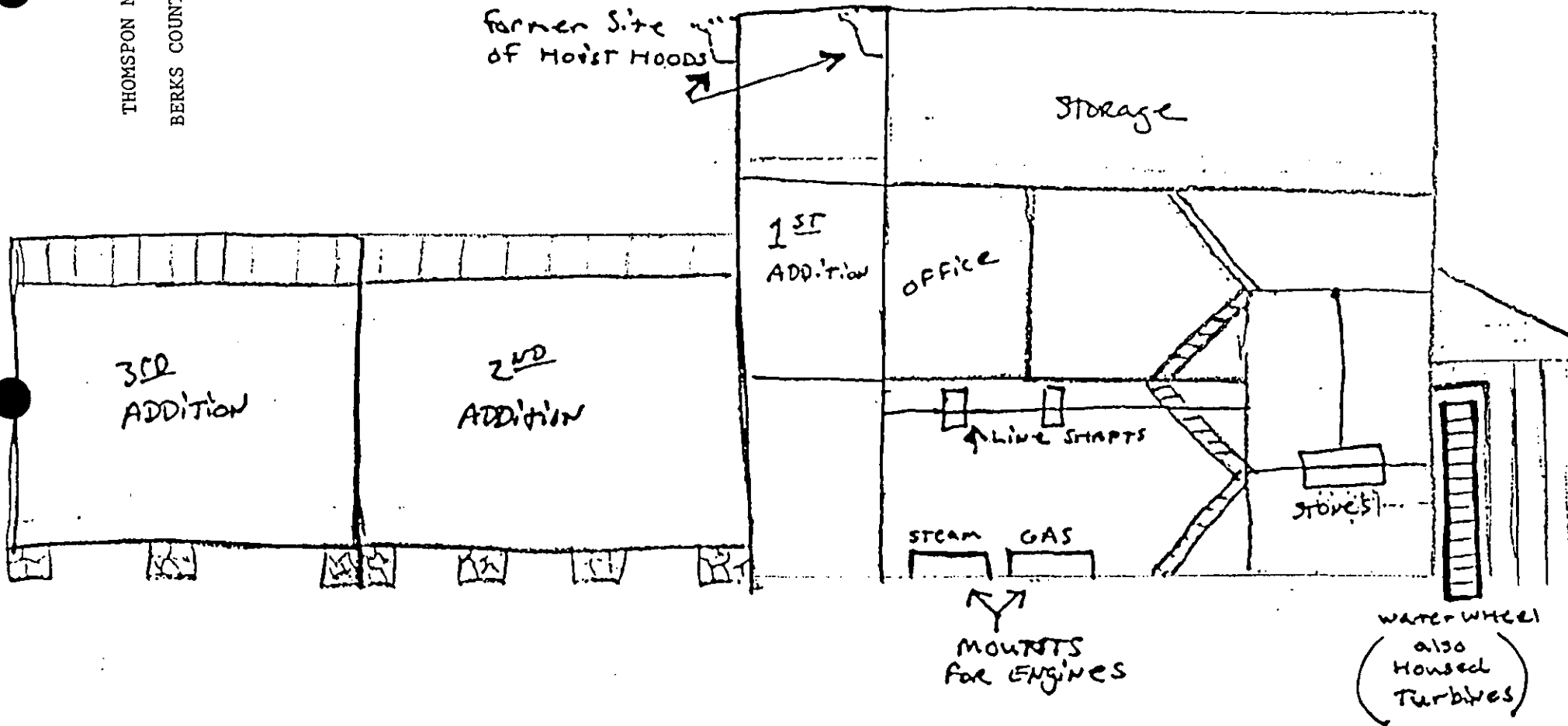
Not to Scale

Key

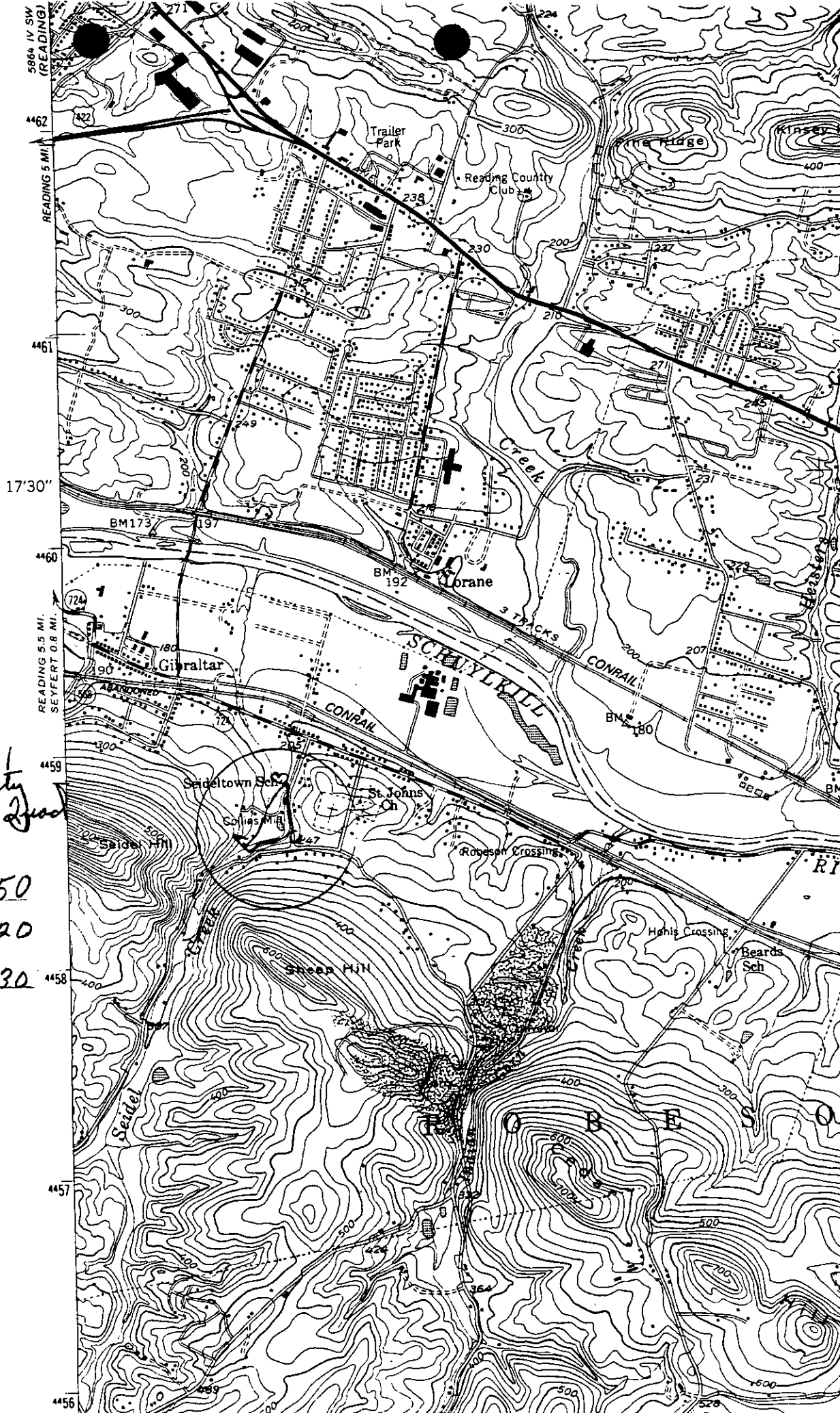
 Boundry

< Photo Direction

THOMPSON MILL
BERKS COUNTY, PA



Not to Scale



Thompson Mill
 Berks County
 Birdsboro Quad
 Zone 18

- 426460 4458550
- 426680 4458820
- 426680 4458630