

Robeson Rolling Mill

At the confluence of the Wissahickon Creek & Schuylkill River since 1690



The Robeson Mills looking from the west bank of the Schuylkill River. Watercolor by Captain Joshua Watson, 1816. Source: The Barra Foundation, Inc.

From Watson's black & white print of the same view (see Year 1816) as written on the rock in the middle of the Creek just below where the Mill's tail race once let the water back into the Wissahickon:

“Look up on the Whissihicon Bridge from the Iron Mills 4 October”

In 1816, there were three mills on the west bank of the Creek: a Sawmill, a Nail Factory, and the Rolling Mill nearest to the River. Contact the author for more information, and please report any problems with links: Griffin Affel, gpaffel@comast.net.

The History of Robeson’s Rolling Mill & the home of the Philadelphia Canoe Club since 1905 in Fairmount Park, Philadelphia

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Preface

This paper traces the history of the Mill that is now home to the Philadelphia Canoe Club, “Robeson’s Rolling Mill,”¹ located on the West side of the confluence of the Wissahickon Creek and the Schuylkill River.

To establish the date of the building’s erection, this paper traces the Mill’s history through deeds, wills, maps, and historical accounts of the area from 1681 to 1905, the date the Canoe Club’s lease began.²

Date of erection: This paper builds on the work of earlier Club members³ to better establish the historical aspects of the building, i.e., when the mill was constructed and the varied ways it has been utilized since that time. The Philadelphia Historical Commission⁴ reported that the building was constructed “circa 1700” and was “Known before 1733 as the Wissahickon Grist and Bolting Mill and after 1748 as the “Roxboro Mills.”⁵ Regretfully, the Commission’s records with the details submitted for that registration are missing. The building is now known as the Philadelphia Canoe Club (PCC) location.

Maps & Indentures: Based on a 1690 and another 1691 lease addendum (“*Indenture*”) to the 1686 101-year lease, the “c. 1700” erection date should be c. 1690. No evidence has been found that the “Corn Mill” referenced on the West side of the Creek was rebuilt later. The paper presents all the known documents in chronological order to help readers see the Mill’s history as known and to spot gaps in the research and make contributions as to how to otherwise confirm the date of the Mill’s erection.

Map Orientation: Note that narrative geographical references to this site and other buildings and mills can be confusing and sometimes unreliable. Most of the older historical maps have a symbol or compass for magnetic North at the top of the map. Where available, a compass from the original map was added to the extracted portion or a compass from a comparable map.

¹ A member of the Robeson family owned or co-owned the mills for 137 of the 173 years between 1691-1864. The name Robeson’s Rolling Mill is the owner’s name in a historical document by Peter Robeson, a Great Grandson of a 1691 owner, and the Mill’s use in c. 1817-1843 as a mill: “...rolling is a metal forming process in which metal is passed through one or more pairs of rolls to reduce the thickness, to make the thickness uniform, to give it the desired shape, and or to impart a desired mechanical property” including nails.” ([Historical Development of Rolling Mills – IspatGuru.](#))

Connections to [Iron manufacturing](#): Andrew Robeson, Sr. owned large tracts of ore-producing lands in Robeson, Berks County, Pa., and his daughter, Magdalen Robeson, married Thomas Potts, A Welshman who became an “Iron Master” and whose descendants founded Pottsville, Pa. Peter’s Grandfather, Jonathon Robeson, built the Oxford Furnace in New Jersey in 1741 where Peter lived for a time and which no doubt influenced the use of the mill to work iron in the early 1800s.

In early documents, the mill was called the “Roxboro Mill” to perhaps distinguish it from the much larger Grist mill on the East bank of the Creek, the largest in the set of three mills. The first two of the three mills were built by Richard Townsend (#s 1 and 2 on key maps). The larger mill (#3) was called the “Wissahickon Mill” in the Road Dockets and was located East of the Wissahickon and North of Ridge Avenue.

Early mills owners Andrew Robeson Sr. and Andrew Jr. (a nephew) were both from Kelso, County **Roxburgh** (*Roxburghshire*), Scotland, a town also located on the confluence of two rivers. CTRL+CLCK <https://mapcarta.com/W103152385>

² The Newport Tower windmill’s erection date range was established in 1984 by radiocarbon testing; this method has not yet been considered due to cost.

³ Many thanks to Ron Avery and Marion Ambros for the extensive work they contributed to documenting the Club’s history.

⁴ The Commission explained 1963 was ‘early days’; they lack any records about its registration, nor know who proposed the Mill.

⁵ See Ridge Ave. Historic District Inventory <https://www.phila.gov/media/20190213131353/Thematic-District-Ridge-Ave-Roxborough.pdf>

Map Redundancy: Many maps were drawn or essentially copied and ‘reissued’ from earlier maps, and many maps look very similar. Relevant sections of such maps were often extracted as needed to be sure added information was captured. On the other hand, earlier maps’ errors or omissions were carried forward on the ‘new’ maps. Maps produced by the Railroad companies are not included as they omitted buildings other than RR Stations. Other than RR maps, maps with few or no buildings are included to document that each map was reviewed.

Acknowledgments & Many Thanks are due to:

Alex Bartlett	Archivist	Chestnut Hill Historical Conservancy
Nina Coffin	Librarian	Free Library of Philadelphia
Nathanael Hodge	Archivist	The Mills Archive Trust (www.millsarchive.org)
Adam Levine	Archivist	Phila. Water Dept. Consultant
Sylvia Myers	Historical Society Archivist	Roxborough Manayunk Wissahickon Historical Society
Megan E. MacCall	Curator, Map Collection	Free Library of Philadelphia
Jefferson M. Moak	Professional Archivist, Historian and Genealogist	General Society of Sons of the Revolution
Edwin W. Owrid	Head Librarian (Inspiration 1955-1967)	William Penn Charter
K. Edward Rice	Archivist	Philadelphia City Archives
Laura J. Stroffolino	Curator Print and Picture Collection	Free Library of Philadelphia
HSP Staff: Lee Arnold & Anthony DiGiovanni	Historical Society of Pennsylvania	
Theresa Stuhlman	Preservation and Development Administrator	Philadelphia Parks & Recreation

“CTRL + CLCK”: This Means to activate a link, hold down the “CTRL” key (left side of the keyboard) and use the mouse to Click at the same time to access the Linked webpage/document. Some links in footnotes may be missing this note; some links only require a Point & Click action to activate even when the note is present. Almost all the links are free, but some free sites do require signup to access them, e.g., the Church of the Latter Day Saints site, which is well worth the time to sign up to access and otherwise non-intrusive: [FamilySearch Home — FamilySearch.org](http://FamilySearch.org). NOTE: There are some LDS links that require you to have first signed into the site: www.familysearch.org

Robeson's Rolling Mill Ownership & Early Uses

Ownership Summary: See the next two pages for a recap of the ownership and leases of the land from 1681 to 1816. The first Endnote has a detailed list and has links to the images of the referenced documents¹.

Pre-Penn: The mill's history starts with a grant from William Penn, but the Swedes in the "New Sweden" settlement at Upland claimed the land decades earlier. "In 1677, John Mattson, Swen Lom, and Lace Dalbo were granted a tract of 300 acres "att ye place called wiessahitkonk on ye westside up in ye Schuyl Kill" (Records of Upland Court, 62)."⁶

The Swedes were overtaken by the Dutch but allowed to continue as a "Swedish Nation." This ended about 1681 when William Penn received his charter for Pennsylvania and the three lower counties, present-day Delaware. Andrew Robeson III (b. 1699, d. 1740) married Magdelin Rudman, a local Swede, at Old Swedes Church. Her father was Andreas Rudman (b. 1668 in Sweden, d. 1708), and he married Elizabeth Mattson (1678 – 1736).

Ownership Complexity: The chain of ownership or control seems more complex than one might expect as the land & the mills were leased, partners added to the lease twice, partitioned by a Sheriff, occupied by 'dower rights,' sold at Sheriff sales, and inherited under various conditions of the Wills of its owners.

The objectives are to:

- 1.) Determine the date the Robeson's Rolling Mill was built,
- 2.) Document its primary purposes over time, i.e., Corn Mill, Rolling Mill, Logwood Mill, Stables, and
- 3.) Present its history in the historical context of the communities it served.

Geographic Focal Point: The 'year page' **1733** recaps the Mill's location within the **key eight-acre parcel of land** that contained the Rolling Mill as one of the three 'Wissahickon Mills' that were commonly owned in 1702.

Recap of Uses: The next three pages recap the uses of the mill and presents the key 1690 & 1691 Deeds that establish its erection date and the later Deeds or other documents that document it use.

Links in the Recap of Uses:

- Where possible, these links are to sites that are generally available to the public. Some links are to the Philadelphia Canoe Club web repository, which contains pictures of non-public paper deeds; these links generally end in philacanoe.org. Please report any problems with these and any other links: Griffin Affel, gpaffel@comast.net.
- References and some links to documents that do not contribute to establishing the use of the mill but do establish the chain of title to the land and mill are in **Endnote #1**.

⁶ A History of the Indian Villages and Place Names in Pennsylvania

https://books.google.com/books?id=5lyLDwAAQBAJ&pg=PT551&lpq=PT551&dq=%221677%22+wissahickon+%22john+mattson%22&source=bl&ots=DlaDLjvln7&sig=ACfU3U0tYy_G3IU_9Rtq9hmrHJv8KWlaMw&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewipooTXou71AhW5kIkEHaQQBwsQ6AF6BAgCEAM#v=onepage&q=%221677%22%20wissahickon%20%22john%20mattson%22&f=false and <https://hsmcpa.org/images/thebulletin/1958vol11no2.pdf> Swedish maps: <https://etc.usf.edu/maps/pages/8100/8118/8118b.pdf> and <http://www.mapsofpa.com/17thcentury/1690lindstromb.jpg>

Year	Name &/or Building Use	Robeson's Rolling Mill, References in Deeds & Wills, Maps, Pictures, Names and its Uses 1686 – 1905 Source and Notes	Key Links for Endnotes
1684	Original Land Grant	1684 William Penn "grants" 500 acres to Robert Turner	Turner 1684 signed by Wm Penn.pdf (philacano.org)
1686	<i>See Sources & Notes</i>	19 Jun 1686: 101-Year Lease 50.5 acres from R. Turner to J Tittery with boundaries land all on West side of the Wissahickon Creek	1686 Fifty and one half Acres Mapped.pdf (philacano.org)
1690	"Corn Mill" (On the West side of Wissahickon Creek)	8 Nov 1690 Indenture - Lease addendum adding C. Sanders & A. Robeson. West side of the Creek based on stated boundary lines and states that it contains a Saw Mill and a Corn Mill.	1690 Nov 8 J Tittery and R Townsend to A Robeson Word to Pdf.pdf (philacano.org)
1691	"Corn Mill" (On the West side of Wissahickon Creek)	4 Apr 1691 Indenture adding J Tyzache <u>as of 1689</u> (addition of Tyzache predates Robeson/Sanders agreement) and states that it contains a Saw Mill and a Corn Mill.	1691 Apr 4 Tittery and Townsend Lease to Tyzache.pdf (philacano.org)
1691	"Corn Mill"	11 Jul 1691 Indenture from R. Turner, Tittery et al. land & lease to A. Robeson and C Sanders; it states that it contains a Saw Mill and a Corn Mill.	11 July 1691 Deed.pdf (philacano.org)
1691	" " "	" " " (Different version, official transcription than above.)	https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSF1-91Y9?i=499&cat=227024
1702	"One Water Corn Mill"	1702 Sep 15 A Robeson to J Vanlaer half 200 acres and half 8 acres. References "One Water Corn Mill" in 4 th line on right and continued "Millns (being three millns under the same roof)"	1702 Sep 15 A Robeson to J Vanlaer half 200 acres and half 8 acres.pdf (philacano.org)
1703	"One Water Corn Mill"	1703 Oct 5 John Vanlaer and Sarah Sanders to Andrew Robeson Jr.	1703 J. Vanlaer and S. Sanders to A. Robeson Jr.pdf (philacano.org)
1720	"Roxborrow Mill and the Bolting Mill")	27 Feb 1719/1720 Andrew Robeson Jr. Will - reports two mills: "...lands belonging to the Roxborrow Mill and Bolting Mill and..." (Roxborrow (<i>Corn/Grist</i>) on West side and Bolting (<i>Flour</i>) Mill on East side of the Wissahickon Creek)	Wills, 1682-1916; indexes to wills, 1682-1924; ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-C9B2-P3NS-Q (familysearch.org)
1748	"Corn or Grist Mill"	1748 Sep 22 Zachariah Whitpaine to Magdalen Robeson: "...Water Corn or [<i>2nd mill</i>] Grist Mills or Millns (sic) (now being two grist mills with two pairs of Stones under one Roof) <u>sometimes called or known by the name Wissahickon Mills and now called Roxborough Mills with their Appurtenances...</u> " "Mill Races" Plural.	Deeds (Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania), 1683-1886 ; index to deeds, 1683-1916; ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSN1-D9NS-K?i=325&cat=227024 (familysearch.org)
1752	"Corn or Grist Mill"	1752 May 22 Magdalen Robeson to Henry Shellenberg - The wording seems to be simply a copy of the wording in deed that conveyed land and mills to Magdalen Robeson 4 years earlier with there being two Mills.	Deeds (Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania), 1683-1886 ; index to deeds, 1683-1916; ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSFB-R9MY-H?i=215&cat=227024 (familysearch.org)

1752	"Rolling Mill"	1752 Aug 22 Deed <u>Rudman Robeson</u> to Henry Shellenberg - The wording is the same as in early part of the deed as Magdalen's deed, but a later section has in it "Rolling" descriptor, phrased as "Stables, Millhouses, Rolling Mills , Buildings,..."	Deeds (Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania), 1683-1886 ; index to deeds, 1683-1916; ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSFB-YQ8X-L?i=228&cat=227024 (familysearch.org)
1755	"Corn or Grist Mill"	1755 Jun 22 Deed Dorothy - Henry Shellenberg to John Vanderen - as above the <u>May 1752</u> deed; work-in-progress to reconcile with prior deed.	1755 Shellenberg to John Vanderan.pdf (philacano.org)
1777	Key Map	John Hills Map: Sketch of the Surprise at German Town by the American Forces Commanded by General Washington October 4th, 1777	Sketch of the surprise of German Town by the American forces commanded by General Washington October 4th 1777 - Scanned Maps - CURIOSity Digital Collections (harvard.edu)
1789	Corn Mill	1789 Dec 8: James Ash, Sheriff, witnesses transfer from the Vanderan Estate to Peter & Jonathon Robeson. Document contains reference to the Sheriff Deed Book. Mill may have been unused.	1789 Dec 8 James Ash Sheriff to Peter and Jonathon Robeson.pdf (philacano.org)
1790	Corn Mill	1790 Mar 6: James Ash, Sheriff, for the Vanderen's estate deed to Peter & Jonathon Robeson: "All those Corn and Grist Mills...on both sides of the Wissahickon Creek..."	1790 Mar 6 James Ash Esq Sheriff Vanderen estate Deed to Peter and Jonathon Robeson.pdf (philacano.org)
1802	Barn	1802 Jul 6: Sheriff Israel Israel to Peter Robeson to satisfy debts of Jonathon Robeson, deceased. 1790 "Corn Mill" is not referenced.	1802 Sheriff Deed to P Robeson.pdf (philacano.org)
TBD	Rolling Mill	TBD - When and who reinstalled the Rolling Mill wheel & works.	TBD
1816	"Iron Mills"	J. Watson 1.) painting and 2.) pen & ink with writing that reads: "Look up on the Whissihicon (<i>sic</i>) Bridge from the Iron Mills 4 October"	1816 Captain Watsons with Wheel Circled.pdf (philacano.org)
1816	Mill	1816 Map of Philadelphia County by John Melish has three mills	https://westphillyhistory.archive.s.upenn.edu/maps/1816-map-melish
1817	"Robeson's Rolling Mill"	1817 records for water height for "Peter Robeson's Rolling Mill."	1817 Water Heights Robeson's Rolling Mill.JPG (4032x3024) (philacano.org)
1816 - 1825	Rolling Mill	Schuylkill Navigation System Collection drawings 1st Reach 1-1.jpg. Has a notable boat landing or dock.	https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1PS8gXP_7M7U1LZHXQBxaxERbVBEade
1820	Rolling Mill	1820 Census of manufactures original, documenting the mill being rented by Dr. John Moore, son-in-law of Peter Robeson; 4 page description.	Records of the 1820 census of manufactures; ark:/61903/3:1:3QHK-93PJ-XFFC?i=273&cat=280127 (familysearch.org)
1820	Rolling Mill	1820 Census TRANSCRIPTION - May need CTRL-CLCK	John Moore Renting the Rolling and Slitting Mill and Nail Factory 1820 Census.pdf (philacano.org)

1822	Rolling Mill	Frederick Graff drawing and documents related to suit and Fairmount Dam raising the River water level upstream, with geographic diagrams and drawing of the Rolling Mill Waterwheel.	Philadelphia Architects and Buildings 1822 (philadelphiabuildings.org)
1822	Rolling Mill & the Nail Factory located between it & the Saw Mill on Ridge Ave.	Document in the Philadelphia City Archives Fairmount Park purchases, Dobson Files. Part of Robeson suit vs. the Schuylkill Navigation Company for the loss of water power when the Navigation Company built the lower dam c. 1816 (Fairmount Waterworks Dam). 2 nd link has the critical water power measurements and some open questions about the Nail Factory.	1822 Measurements Robeson.pdf (philacano.org) 1822 Robeson Mills Water Levels and Waterpower Measurments.pdf (philacano.org)
1827	Not Reported	Schuylkill Navigation Co. Maps Images 1-112 and 1-1	https://www.racc.edu/sites/default/files/imported/Yocum/canal/Reaches/Maps/Reach1/1-112.gif
1845	Rolling Mill	2nd set of Frederick Graff drawing and related 2nd suit documents with waterwheel and measurements for Freshet occurring 1839 and prior, being relevant as were before the dam was rebuilt in 1843-1844.	Philadelphia Architects & Buildings 1845 (philadelphiabuildings.org)
1841 - 1848	'Logwood Mill' making paints and dyes from logwood ⁷	"Plan of the Township of Roxborough" and note from Jon. Robeson about raised level water at mouth of Creek as problem. <i>Public Ledger</i> 1841: "Wanted – A person well acquainted with Chipping and Grinding all kinds of Dye Woods...at Robeson's Mills"	Township of Roxborough by M. Dripps [1848] Jonathon Robeson note flow of water to the Logwood Mill
1874	Stables	Used as a stable by Fairmount Park Guards and pre-Revolutionary War erection date assertion	1902 Dec 8 Philadelphia Inquirer Article ONE Page.pdf (philacano.org)
1877	Social Eating & Fishing Club	The Schuylkill Fishing Co. of the State in Schuylkill - leased & Occupied as its HQ 1877 - 1887; leases through 1902 as base to fish	Schuylkill Fishing Co Background
1905	Canoe Club	Philadelphia Canoe Club	Philadelphia Canoe Club - Home (philacano.org)

Link – May require downloading as is an Excel File: [Land Ownership History and Links.pdf](#) (philacano.org)

⁷ See background on dye mills here: [Mills make the world go round – Page 11 – The Mills Archive](#)

Erection Date

The mills in the Wissahickon Valley have been researched and documented by many historians and several amateurs, although one of the latter was quite accomplished, i.e., Douglas Macfarlan, MD.ⁱⁱ

In Macfarlan's preface for the three mills, labeled #1, #2, and #3, he wrote, "Location: Mouth of the Wissahickon. There were several mills at this location at various times, first a grist and saw mill; the earliest mills were on the west bank at the mouth and was later known as the Roxboro mill" (page 6). The "west bank at the mouth" is where Robeson's Rolling Mill still stands. It seems very likely that mill #2, the sawmill was built first to provide lumber to build houses, build the other mill, and build the head race (water source) to the Corn Mill.

The original of an early deed addendum of the leaseholders & builders was found (1690 Joshua Tittery, Richard Townsend adding Andrew Robeson and Charles Sanders) and is hard to read, so a partial transcription was created. A lengthier transcription and the images of the entire deed are included in the Endnotes.

Due to the involvement of multiple parties, the deed has a great deal of repetition; below is a crucial section relative to the erection date of the first two mills **by or before 1690 on the west side of Wissahickon Creek:**

"And whereas the said Joshua Tittery by his deed under his hand and seal dated the eighth day of **November 1690**⁸, did with the consent of the said Richard Townsend, Witnessed by his being party thereto for the consideration therein mentioned, grant alien, bargain, sell, estoppel, confirm, demise and assign to the said Andrew Robson and Charles Saunders⁹, their ... heirs and assigns, equally between them, one full just and equal and undivided Moitie⁵ & half part of said fifty and a half acres of Land¹⁰, leases and premises with the half of **all the tilled Land, Improvements, Houses, Saw and Corn Mills, and of all the Iron Work, Timber work Millstones and Tools and improvements**, then belonging or intended to belong unto then provided or intended to be provided for the mills aforesaid and all the other Timber and Wood, sawed or unsawed, for during and unto the full end of the term yet to come and yet expired... (See Endnoteⁱⁱⁱ)

The author concludes that the existing Robeson Rolling Mill is the original building, built before or finished in 1690. And, the mill stands in the original plot of the originally leased land.

While no evidence has been found that the mill was later rebuilt, it is possible that the mill was rebuilt on the same location as the original mill.

⁸ Reference to yet an earlier agreement wherein Tittery and Townsend create a 'partnership agreement.'

⁹ Charles Sanders (or Saunders) was a lawyer, and in 1694, he was appointed to the "Council of the Provinces of Pennsylvania" along with Andrew Robeson and Robert Turner: pg. 467 [Pennsylvania colonial records. V. 1 \(familysearch.org\)](http://familysearch.org)

¹⁰ All of which lay on the west side of the Wissahickon per the original (1686) and revised (1689 and 1690) leases.

Summary – Erection Date by 1690 on 50 ½ Acres

This assertion is based on the fact that that a “Corn Mill” is referenced in three deeds, 8 Nov. 1690, 4 April 1691, and the 11 July 1691 indentures, that leased or sold the land on the west side of the Wissahickon Creek and Robeson’s Rolling Mill is the still existent Mill at the confluence of the Wissahickon Creek and Schuylkill River.¹¹

Tittery and Townsend leased the land on the west side of the creek as there was enough land for both a saw and corn mill there just below a natural dam¹² on the Wissahickon Creek. The land on the east side of the Creek just below the dam was perhaps deemed to be too low and there was a natural floodplain to the east, close to the Wissahickon and the Schuylkill River. Later, Tittery and Townsend, and the others who joined the venture (especially Robeson and Sanders) came to see that a larger mill with more waterpower could be built on the east side just above the dam when large race and mill pond was completed upstream approximately 500 feet.

After the larger ‘Wissahickon Mills’ complex was built, the corn mill on the west bank may well have been used to mill grains that came down the Schuylkill River or across from Lower Merion by way of Robeson’s Ferry. For more on this possibility, see Endnote^{iv}.

Next Steps: The effort is underway to find qualified historians and or preservationists to inspect the Mill to see if any building techniques, materials, or perhaps radiocarbon dating, can affirm its age and one critical alteration. The alteration: it is expected that the wheel pit was widened pre-1752 to fit the larger Rolling Waterwheel – see the Year 1822 for the waterwheels size.

Summary: There were once over fifty mills in the Wissahickon Creek and its tributaries. While the Robeson Rolling Mill could be as old as 333 years (built before c. 1690) or rebuilt as a Rolling Mill by 1752, its ranking as the oldest Mill still standing on the Wissahickon is remarkable.

See this Endnote for a review of the other mills standing in the Valley outside of Philadelphia.^v

¹¹ The 11 July 1691 added John Tyzack as an owner, retrospectively, it seems. It references the “Tripartite Indentures of the co-partnership mentioned, and which bear date the twenty-fifth day of March 1689.”

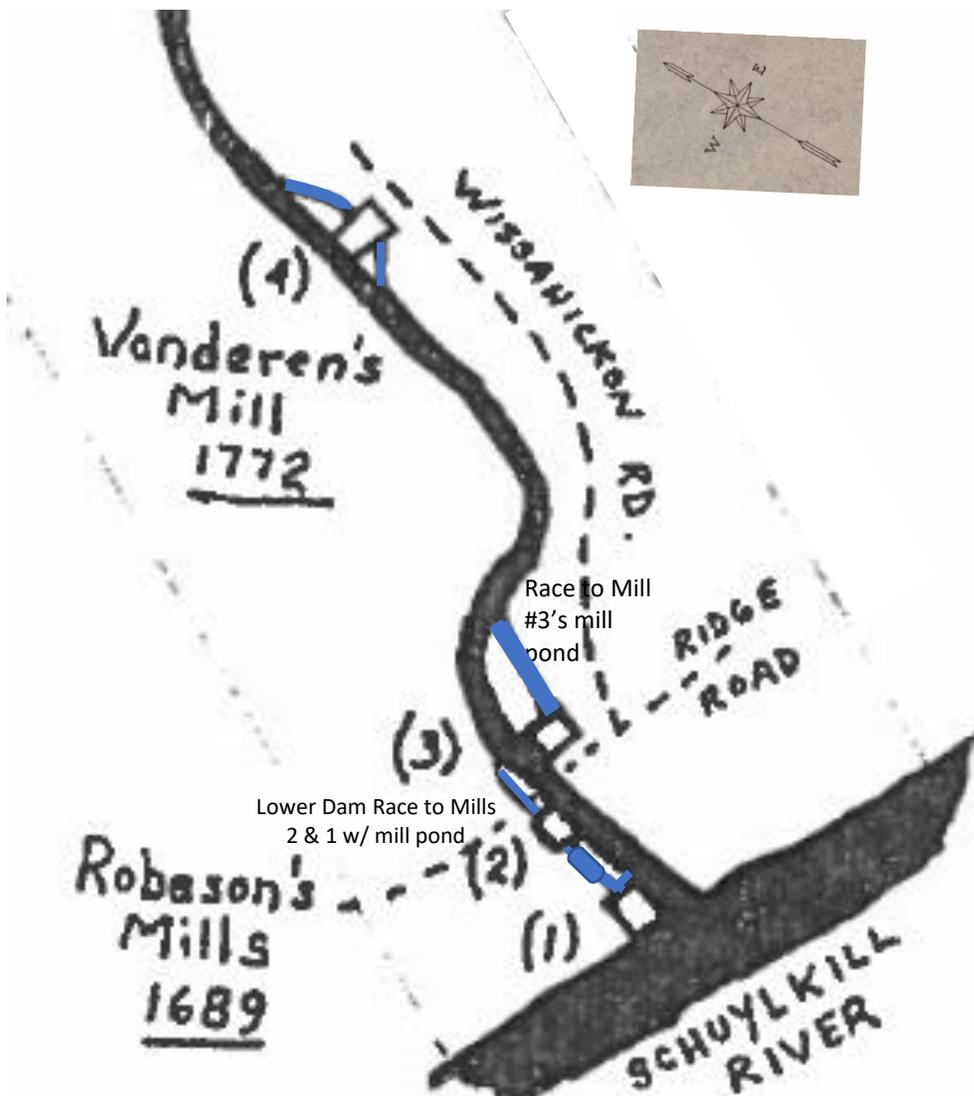
¹² See for reference to lower dam, Chap 11 “Early History” [Full text of "The Wissahickon" \(archive.org\)](#)

The Three Mills c. 1691-1702 on 200 Acres

The Robeson's Rolling Mill (#1) For perspective, here is a draft drawing of the water Races to the Wissahickon Mill (#3) and the Saw Mill (#2), whose tail race lead to the Rolling Mill (#1), which was in this time frame a Corn Mill.

The drawing is based on the map from John P. Myers, "The Early Mills of Roxborough," 1991, as drawn by his wife Karen. Blue coloring was added to show water in races. Early on, the Wissahickon was crossed via a 'ford' before there was a bridge. (The date bridge was erected is still being researched.)

At first, there was a natural dam, the lower dam where the race provided water for Mills # 1 and #2 shown below. The race to Mill #3, which carried a good deal more water to that larger mill with three millstones "under one roof" may or may not have need another natural dam to provide water; no pre-1800 map illustrates an upper dam. To improve and control the Creek's waterflow, the natural upper dam above Mill #3 was perhaps fortified between 1691 and 1702 and a sluice gate and race added connect the Creek a 'mill pond.' A larger dam above Mill #3 was reportedly built well after 1746.¹³



The 500 ft. Race from Mill #2 to Mill #3 may well have looked like the below pictures, likely the 3rd/simplest race:

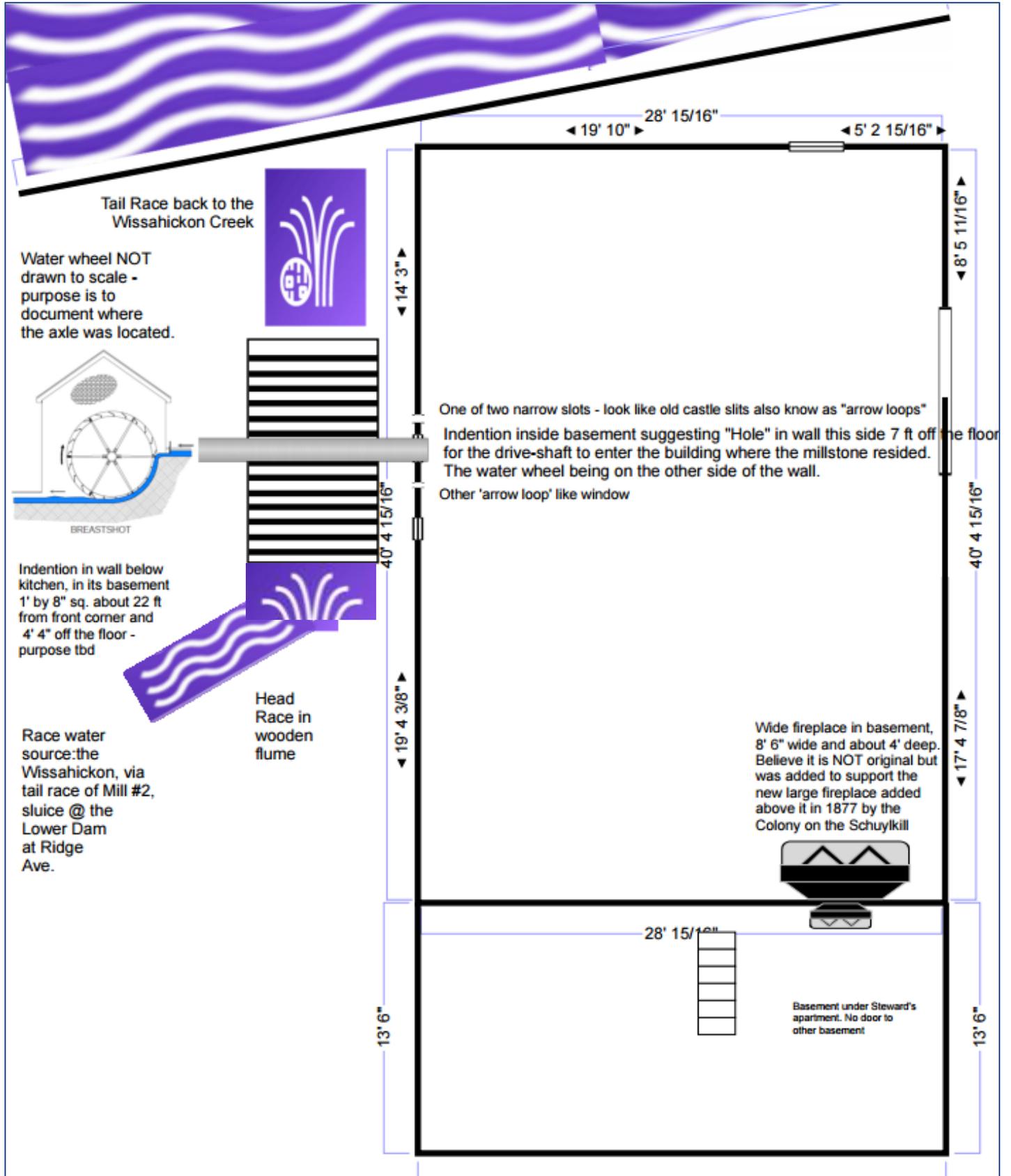


Thompson-Neely Mill Race at Washington's Crossing gate to head race from mill pond:



¹³ Per H. G. Jones: "Historic notes of olden time in Roxborough and Manayunk" [FamilySearch Books Search Results](#) Pg 23.

Possible design of the Robeson Rolling Mill (#1). This possible design assumes the original structure is the basic rectangle as shown below, being the plan of the basement/stone floor¹⁴. The Wissahickon Creek runs at a slight angle at the top of the picture as shown on the prior page. (Endnote 1st floor; 2nd floor all open above main room and two rooms above Stewards' quarters^{vi}.)

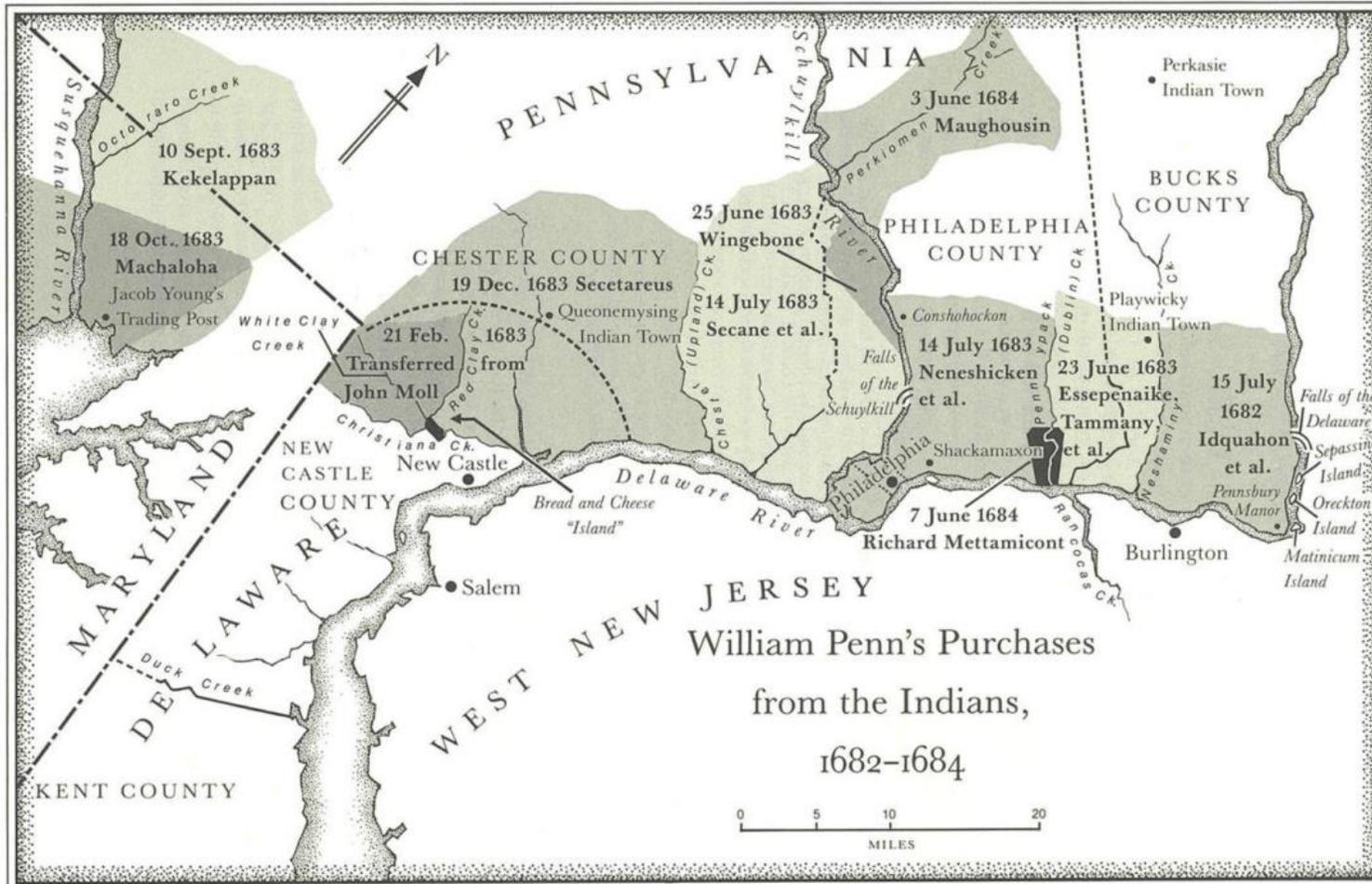


¹⁴ The floor on which the Millstones are situated. See Endnote for the layout of the 1st floor.

1681 – 1733: The Early Years & Mill Erection Dating Details

Pre-1681 The Pre-Colonial Native Pennsylvania Residents

<https://roxboroughpa.com/uploads/attachments/cjjodb1150db91ycxmhgwsv92-ridge-avenue-roxborough-thematic-historic-district-nomination.pdf>



Between 1681 and 1685, William Penn conveyed more than 4,000 acres of land in lower northwest Philadelphia to 11 original purchasers.

.....

See also link below, page 15, via a free sign-on/sign-up to the site, another interesting Indian map:

Figure 4. William Penn's Purchases from the Indians, 1682-1684, from Richard S. Dunn and Mary Maples Dunn, eds., *The Papers of William Penn, Volume 2: 1680-1684*, 1982.

https://www.jstor.org/stable/20090131?read-now=1&refreqid=excelsior%3Ad657ff0555798c79c1f7ac7f80ff6b37&seq=13#page_scan_tab_contents

Other Pre-Penn with local map: https://www.jstor.org/stable/20090131?read-now=1&seq=18#page_scan_tab_contents

1681 A map of the improved part of the Province of Pensilvania [sic] in America: begun by Wil. Penn, Proprietary & Governor (sic) thereof anno 1681

<https://www.loc.gov/item/2006625100/> enlarged <https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3820.ct001815/?r=0.352,0.322,0.35,0.16,0> and also a survey completed for Robert Turner pre-Patent: [Book D-75 pg 213.pdf \(state.pa.us\)](#)



Map Contributor Names

Holme, Thomas. First Pennsylvania Surveyor General. Born 1624 and died 1695.
Lamb, Francis, Greene, Robert, active 1674-1690. Thornton, John, 1641-1708.

Created / Published London: Sold by Rob. Greene at the Rose & Crowne in Budg. Row and by John Thornton at the Platt in the Minories, [1705?]

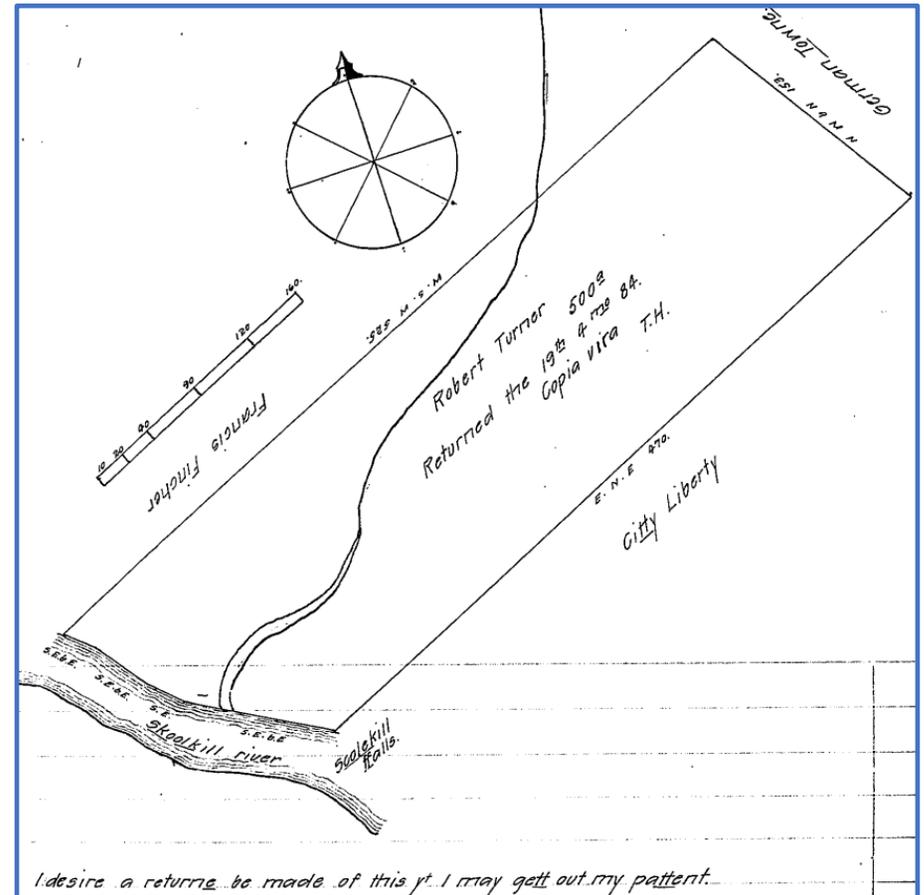
Referenced as the **1687 map** in some places – see different copy and this date far right ¾ way to top in narrative:

https://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/2/25/Holme%27s_Map_of_Pennsylvania_%281687%29.jpg

See too another apparently earlier draft Survey with names such as **Andrew Robeson**, Wm. Plamer and Jon. Streper¹⁵ (or perhaps Jan Streppers) & others to the east of Turner here: [Book B22 438.pdf \(state.pa.us\)](#)

It would seem that the original 'draft' (not found) may have been penned by Robert Turner himself as the bottom line of its transcription says "I desire a returne (sic) be made of this yet I may gett out my patten^t" (sic).

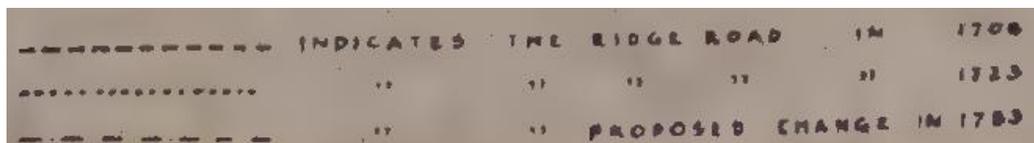
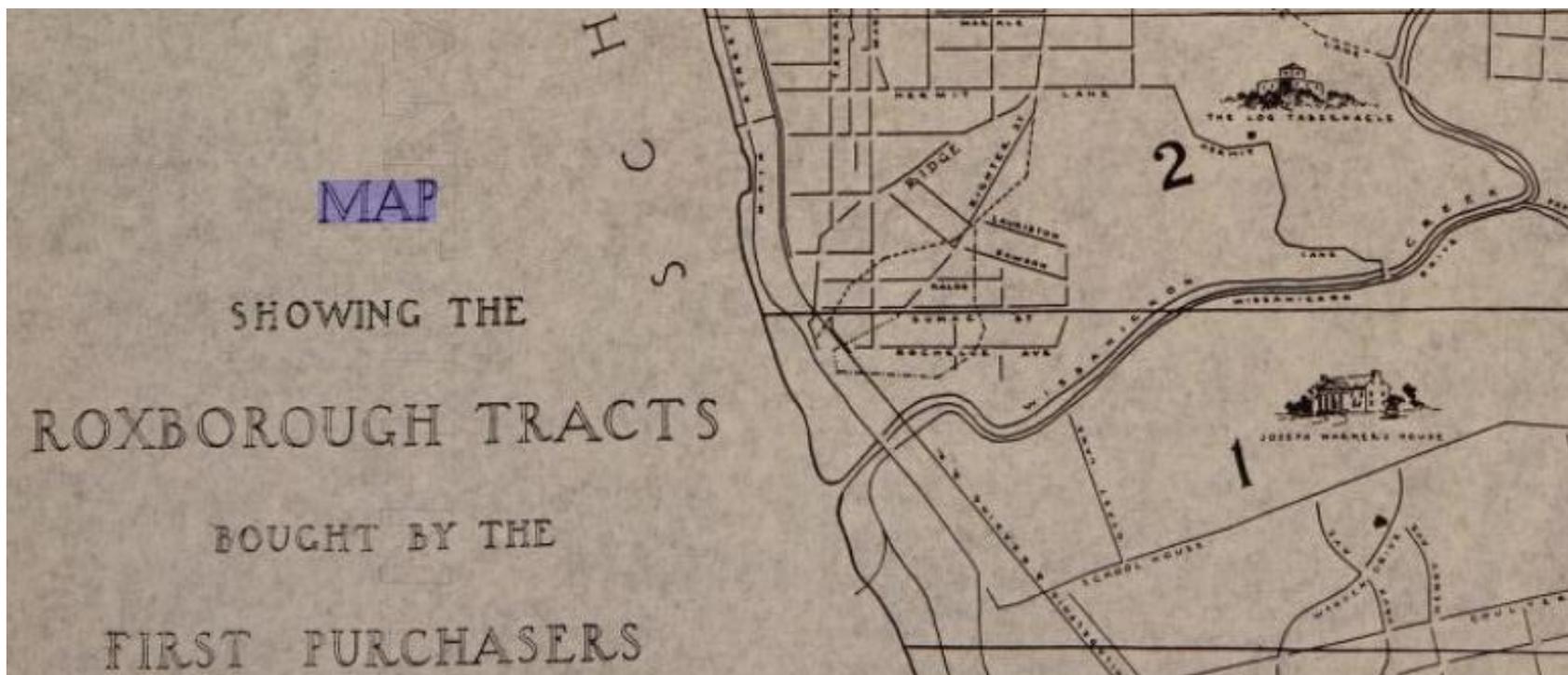
The Patent 1684 signed by William Penn: See the Endnote as this patent was reportedly written and signed by Penn.^{vii}



¹⁵ Perhaps the father or uncle of William Streper who reportedly built Streper's Mill in Springfield Township (Montgomery County) c. 1761. See [Historic Structures | Morris Arboretum](#) and [Genealogies Details — FamilySearch.org](#) See to other Leonard and son John Streper family from Germantown and Springfield: [Genealogies Details — FamilySearch.org](#)

1681 Boundaries originally drawn by Thomas Holme, Penn's first Surveyor General¹⁶. Overlaid on map of area streets are circa 1783¹⁷

<https://archive.org/details/historisketch00mile/page/n93/mode/2up?ref=ol&q=purchasers&view=theater>



¹⁶ To respect residents before Wm. Penn, see the earliest map found 1634 Indian Tribes: Illustrated map of the Philadelphia Region when known as Coaquannock, "Grove of Tall Pines," at the time of first European contact, c. 1634. <https://www.philageohistory.org/geohistory/resources/phila-subdiv-genealogy-web.pdf> Map Background: <https://www.delawarenation-nsn.gov/delaware-nation-obtains-historical-map/> and http://phillytrees.blogspot.com/2014/05/the-philadelphia-palimpsest_3.html

¹⁷ General reference for many maps, not one above: <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/index2.cfm>

1682 The arrival of Richard Townsend¹⁸ one of the mill builders with Wm. Penn: more follows next page related to the Wissahickon Mills

Source: Chronology of Upland, PA from 1681 through 1939 and A Chronology of the Chester Mills from 1681 through 1858

<https://www.uplandboro.org/sites/g/files/vyhlf5111/f/uploads/chronology-of-upland.pdf>

William Penn and Townsend: "With Penn came two of his nearest friends, Richard and Robert Townsend, and they were with Penn on November 30, 1682, when the famous interview with the Indian tribes took place under the large elm tree as Sackamaxon, now Kensington, and when he planned and named the city of Philadelphia."¹⁹

Lumber to build the Mills: Importance of this passage: Supports point that one of first two mills was a saw-mill.

"**1682** - Richard Townsend, a Millwright by trade, also a passenger on the "Welcome"²⁰, was sent out by the stock company to erect a mill "for grinding and the sawing of boards", so that the early settlers would have lumber for their houses and flour for their tables. He was awarded two shares in the partnership. Townsend had built 1 or 2 mills for the partnership in London. He was also most likely instrumental in helping Caleb Pusey with the building of the east room of his house. The ship "Welcome" carried the first mill "ready-framed" for erection."^{viii} (*Ready framed mills erected in Chester County, the Chester Mills.*)²¹

¹⁸ Free site: <https://www.familysearch.org/tree/person/sources/LBBM-HH9>

¹⁹ From here and 2nd link original source: <https://pilgrimsandpatriots.com/?tag=testimony-richard-townsend> and see "History of Chester County, Pennsylvania with Genealogical and Biographical Sketches, by John Smith Futhey"

²⁰ Arrived with Wm. Penn and came with his wife, a son born on the voyages, a daughter and three servants.

²¹ For more on his move to Phila. And building a mill in Germantown ca. 1684 see:

<https://www.familysearch.org/library/books/viewer/726065/?offset=&return=1#page=11&viewer=picture&o=search&n=0&q=hutchins>

1684 Second Colonial Mill & Richard Townsend

PHILADELPHIA: Townsend's first mill erected 1683. On left drawn with its head race intact from Keyser's "History of Old Germantown": [The Settlement of Germantown in 1683.pdf \(gfsnet.org\)](#)

On right, pictured c. 1890 when then known as Robert's Mill in Germantown, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. [Image of PHILADELPHIA: MILL, C1890. - Robert's Mill In Germantown, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Photograph, C 1890. From Granger - Historical Picture Archive](#)



Fig. 3 Townsend's Mill, on Mill Road, no date referenced¹²

Pre-Pennsylvania British Mills Managed by Townsend: Links are free with simple sign-up to [The Mills Archive – We preserve & protect records of our milling history](#). King's Mill Cambridge, Newnham Mill Cambridge and Bishop's Mill Cambridge - On Jan 12 1669 granted a lease for 21 years with Mr. Townsend of King's Mill Bishop's Mill and Newnham Mill and 'out of the first 2 years to be allowed 20 or 21 li [pounds] paid by them for repayres.': [Townsend, – The Mills Archive](#)

Sackamaxon: Background on Townsend's relationship with William Penn: [Tag: Testimony Richard Townsend | Pilgrims and Patriots](#) and the first mill in Chester: [The Birth of Chester Mills \(calebpuseyhouse.com\)](#) and [Richard Townsend's Original Dwelling; Oldest Remaining House In Pennsylvania | Pilgrims and Patriots](#)

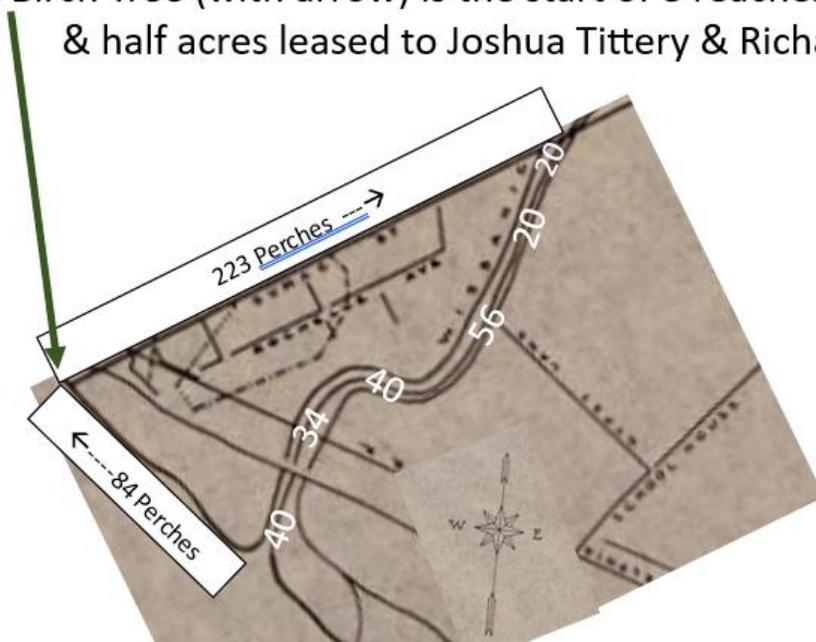
1686 as referenced date, a narrative from the Chadwick Papers²²: (Note page one is right after page 2)

<https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/36b02456-d805-4506-9c7c-16f7354b4fb8/downloads/Chadwick%20Papers%20Volume%2036.pdf?ver=1591910278900> .

On June 19th 1686, Robert Turner leased for 101 years, 50½ acres along the Wissahickon to Joshua Tittery, a broad-glass maker, and Richard Townsend, a millwright, late of London; the partners agreeing to build mills and improve the property.

The grist mill, saw mill and dwelling were erected before 1686 and in 1689 they are mentioned in a deed of that year when the new owners sold a third interest in the mill and land to John Tysack, a broad-glass maker of London.

‘First Purchasers’ map with the fifty & half acres’ east boundary being “Several Courses” down the Wissahickon Creek, perches in white font. A Birch Tree (with arrow) is the start of 8 reaches that bounded the fifty & half acres leased to Joshua Tittery & Richard Townsend.



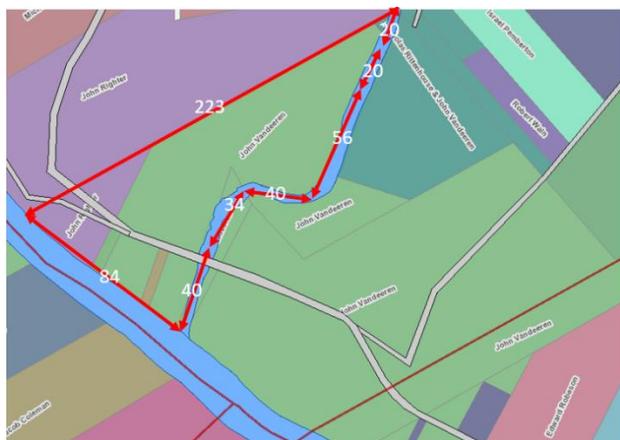
²² ‘AC Chadwick’, Alexander Cox Chadwick Jr. (1890-1957) was a newspaper editor in East Falls. He was editor of the Roxborough Times and, later, the Suburban Press newspapers which served Philadelphia's northwestern communities. The Chadwick Papers, 1900-1937, contains 73 scrapbooks on local history that are organized by subject.

1687 A map of ye improved part of Pensilvania in America, divided into countyes, townships, and lotts - Holme, Thomas, -1695

<https://www.loc.gov/item/81692882/> enlarged <https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3820.ct004136/?r=0.411,0.538,0.236,0.108,0>

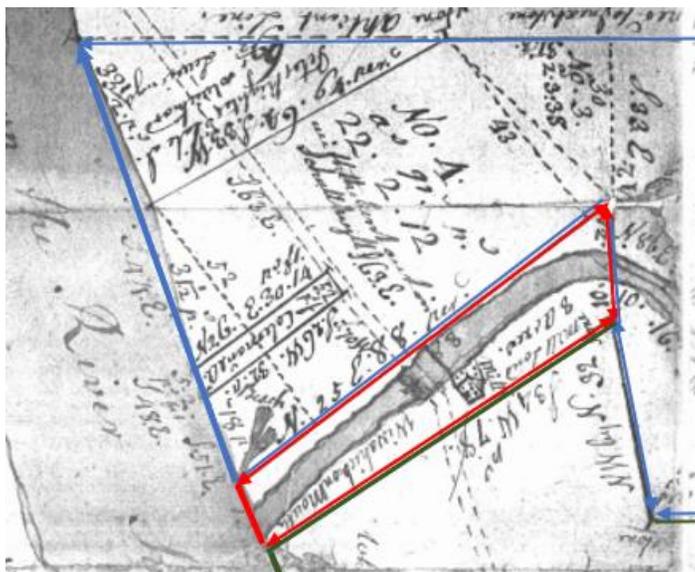


1690 Nov 8: 50 ½ acres lease: Boundaries of the Indenture adding Robeson & Sanders with boundaries of the Fifty & Half Acres lease by J. Tittery & R. Townsend as referenced in the 1690 and 1691 Indentures; the 1691 indenture references the 1689 partnership between Tittery & Townsend.²³



“...Andrew Robson and Charles Saunders²⁴, their ... heirs and assigns, equally between them, one full just and equal and undivided Moitie⁵ & half part of said fifty and a half acres of Land²⁵, leases and premises with the half of all the tilled Land, Improvements, Houses, **Saw and Corn Mills**, and of all the Iron Work, Timber work Millstones and Tools and improvements...”

Note that both the Saw and Corn Mills lay on the West bank of the Wissahickon as of 8 Nov 1690.



The newer & larger mill on the East side of the Creek was completed sometime before 1702, when the Writ of Partition created the 8 acre parcel shown on the left in a Lehman map from 1760. (This map is inserted here as it better defines the parcel that straddled the Creek than the one above, for reason explained later.)

²³ Overlaid on the University of Pennsylvania “1777 Map” Series: CTRL+CLCK: [Mapping West Philadelphia 1777 \(upenn.edu\)](http://Mapping West Philadelphia 1777 (upenn.edu))

²⁴ Charles Sanders (or Saunders) was a lawyer, and in 1694, he was appointed to the “Council of the Provinces of Pennsylvania” along with Andrew Robeson and Robert Turner: pg. 467 [Pennsylvania colonial records. V. 1 \(familysearch.org\)](http://Pennsylvania colonial records. V. 1 (familysearch.org))

²⁵ All of which lay on the west side of the Wissahickon per the original (1686) and revised (1689 and 1690) leases.

1691 Apr 4 Deed from Robert Turner (land owner), Josuha Tittery, Richard Townsend of 50.5 acres leased to John Tysache. See Deed book H vol. 16 page 417 (Named spelled Sanders in some documents.)

Transcription: Indenture **4th day of April, 1691** Josuha Tittery to John Tyzache by Line Number starting at [line #s in brackets] **with key reference to 25th March 1689** 'Copartnership' with Richard Townsend – extension of the lease to Tysache pre-dated the Indenture on the prior page.

Transcription notes: Some paragraph breaks & commas have been added to ease reading; original punctuation is followed unless it seriously hinders are reading. Names are spelled as written, and keywords are emboldened.

[1] "This Indenture was made this 4th day of the second month April *Anno Domini (year of our Lord)* 1691 Between Joshua Tittery of the County of Philadelphia in the Province of Pennsylvania in America, Broad glass maker, of the one part

[2] And John Tyzache of the City of London, also broad glass maker of the other part. Whereas Robt Turner of the said town & County Merchant, by his hands (?)

Indented under his hand & seal, hath demified (*sic*), granted & to

[3] (*tbd 'his'?*) letter to the said Jousha Tittery his heirs & assigns a piece of land in the said county (being part and parcel of his (*R Turner*) five hundred acres of land and called Shoemack park. Beginning at a corner marked **birch tree** standing (*Same as 1691 deed with a Birch is on River NW corner of property*)

[4] (*reach 1*) on the Shuillhill (*sic*) river, thence **East North East two hundred and twenty three perches** to a corner marked popular standing upon Wessahickon Runn (*sic*)²⁶, from thence down the Severale (*sic*) Courses of the said run Viz: (*to wit*)

South West [5] & by South Twenty perches (*reach 2*),

Thence **South West twenty perches** (*reach 3*),

Thence **South by South West fifty six perches** (*reach 4*),

thence **West & by North forty Perches** (*reach 5*),

Thence **South West thirty four perches** (*reach 6*).

Thence **South by South West fourty** (*perches*) (*reach 7*) [6] perches unto Shuillhill Creek,

Thence **North West** by the said Shuillhill Creek **eighty four perches** (*reach 8*) to the said first marked Birch tree being the place of the beginning containing fifty & a half acres of land With all its Improvements [7] & appurtenances therein..."

Line [10] "... And Whereas the said Joshua Tittery, Richard Townsend & the said John Tyzache have entered into a Joint Copartnership in the said land (*50.5 acres*) & in other things in Manner in the said Indentures [11] of **Copartnership** Mentioned dated the **25th day of March 1689**. Now these present Indentures witnesseth that the said Joshua Tittery with consent of the said Richard Townsend for & in consideration of the [12] sum of fifteen pounds lawful monie (*sic*) of

²⁶ From the document:

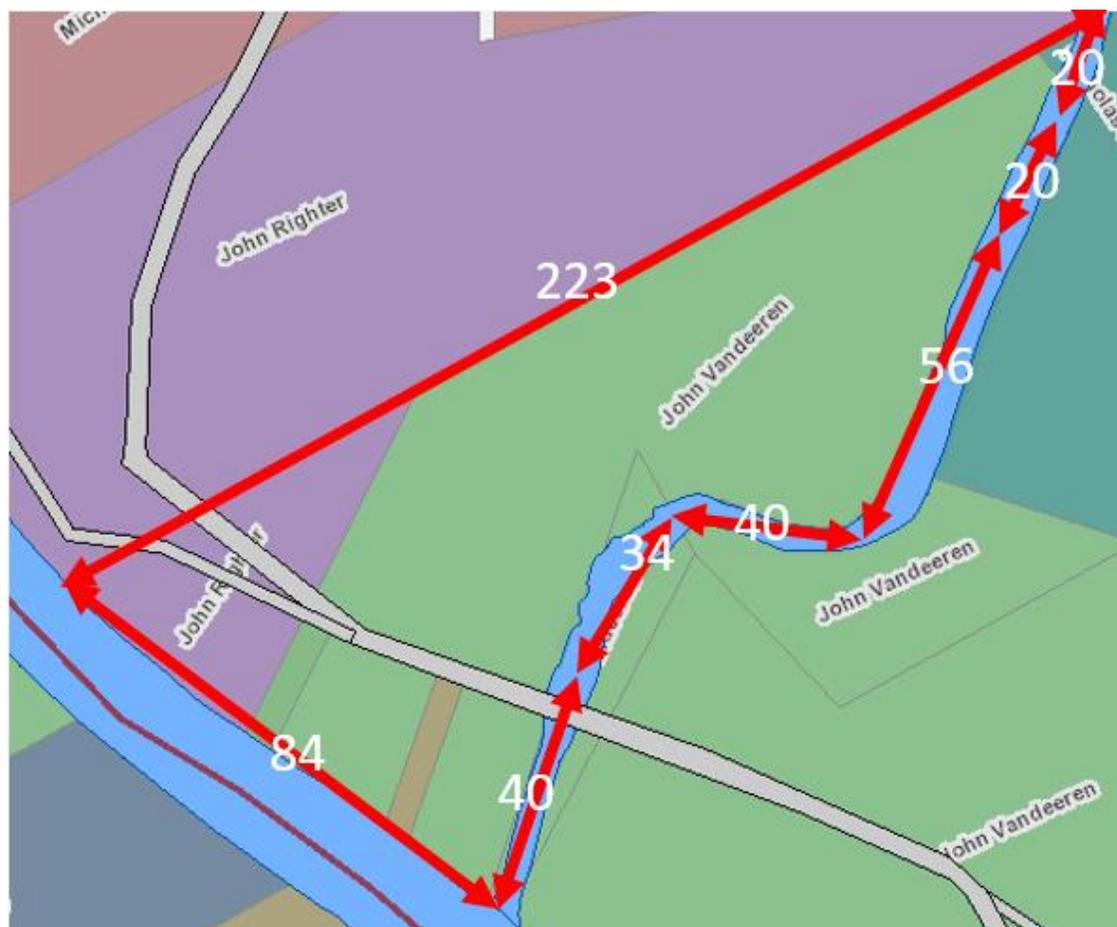
the said Province to him in hand paid or Secured to be paid by the said John Tyzache & his Attorneys the receipt whereof the said Josuha Tittery doth hereby acknowledge & thereof with [13] acquit exonerate & discharge the said John Tyzache his heirs estates & (?) for ever by their presence hath given granted & aliened, bargained, sold, enfeoffed confirmed demified & assigned & by these presents doth give..."

Line [14] "grant, alien, bargain, sell, enfeoff confirm of the said fifty & a half acres of Land Leases & premises with the Line [15] full equal & undivided Sixth part of all the tilled land improvements **Houses Saw & Corn Mills** & all the Iron work timber works, Mill Stones, tooles & Implements now belonging, unto, or which are Intented (*sic*) to [16] belong unto..."

The Significance of the Indenture adding John Tyzache as of 25 March 1689

As of 1689, 1691 and as in the 1690²⁷

Indenture, all improvements were on the West side of Wissahickon Creek and included a **Saw Mill** and a **Corn Mill**.



²⁷ See old transcription of 1691 Indenture here **Image 501 7th line:** [Deeds \(Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania\), 1683-1886 ; index to deeds, 1683-1916 \(familysearch.org\)](#)

1691 Jul 11: Sale of land and lease – 500 acres land from Robert Turner to Andrew Robeson Sr. and Charles Sanders and the rights to leased land from J. Tittery, R. Townsend and J. Tyzache not already owned by Robeson & Sanders as of 8 Nov 1690.

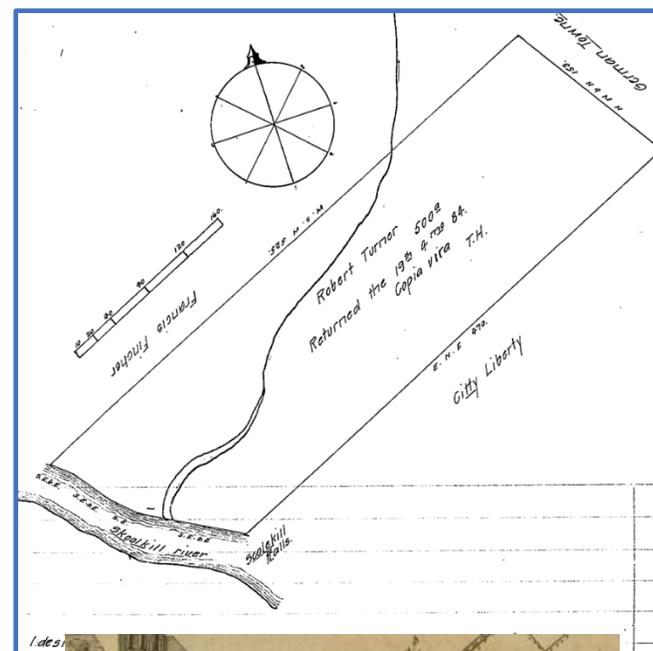
This indenture reiterates the two prior agreements and states that “Saw and Corn Mills” existed then and it adds the consent of three others not mentioned before: “...Robert Ewer²⁸, Thomas Tresse, of the same place, Merchants, and **William Preston of the same county, Mason...**”

William Preston is an interesting addition for several reasons. First, reportedly for his arrival: From “William Preston of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and Allied Families” by Charles Starne Belsterling, 1934. “William and his wife sailed from England in the ship America in company with Francis Daniel Pastorius, Thomas Lloyd and some 80 other passengers, leaving June 10, 1683 and arriving August 20, 1683.” Note his place of burial, Oxford burial ground near the Tacony-Palmyra Bridge, and see too a description of his son Armor life: CTRL-CLCK: [William Preston \(1650-1717\)](#) and [Paul Armor Preston \(1684-1732\)](#)

As an interesting coincidence, William and Ann’s daughter, Priscilla, married the son of John (Johannes) Vanlear (son was also John), and the father owned the ½ rights to the mills in 1701/1702. See the “Writ of Partition” later for more details (although how the father came to own the land is still being researched).

Master Builder – William Preston’s Occupation has been reported as “Master Builder; Entrusted with the financial affairs and building erection of the Society of Friends of Philadelphia.” [Geni - William Preston \(1650-1717\)- Frankford](#) While this cited reference²⁹ has not been verified, the original Indenture cited above reference to his being a “Mason” is interesting. It infers that perhaps Tittery & Townsend contracted with Preston to build the two mills and still owed him debts for the work.³⁰

Falls’s Creek Saw Mill³¹: The land at the next creek downstream from the Wissahickon, Falls Creek or Falls Run, was owned in part by a partner in the Robeson’s Mills, John Tyzache. According to the 1750 A map of Philadelphia and parts adjacent <https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3824p.ct000294/> or <http://www.lowermerionhistory.org/atlas/scull.html> , there was a saw mill on this stream, but it may have been on William Palmer’s land. William Palmer was one of the twelve men who participated in the 1702 Writ of Partition of the 200 acres in 1702. Coincidentally, William’s son Paul (b. 1690 d. 1732) was regarded as a “leading iron worker of his day” and, of interest later, the value of nails in Colonial days is well described here on page 89 (page 74 in original text): [William Preston of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and allied families \(familysearch.org\)](#)



²⁸ Robert Ewer’s 1697 Will references Robert Turner, John Songhurst, and Samuel Carpenter among others: [Genealogies Details — FamilySearch.org](#)

²⁹ Update June 17, see page 67 Centre Square Meeting House and page 69: [William Preston of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania and allied families \(familysearch.org\)](#) See also: [Inventory of Church Archives: Society of Friends in Pennsylvania - Pennsylvania Historical Survey - Google Books](#)

³⁰ In the 11 Jul 1691 deed, Preston is referenced as an “attorney” for Tyzache, but in the deed he later signed in London in 1692, Tyzache only “Nominate(d)” Patrick Robinson, Joseph Tittery, and Robert Ewer as “Attorneys,” and not Preston

³¹ See John Reeds map: [...Map of the city and liberties of Philadelphia, with the catalogue of purchasers, is humbly dedicated by their most obedient humble servant, John Reed. | APS Digital Library \(amphilsoc.org\)](#)

1693 Robeson's Ferry reported to have existed for 30 years^{ix} before the road east to Ridge was petitioned for in 1723 Not a Map, but reference to the Robeson Ferry: The Stony Part of Schuylkill <https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwj7qGB-ar6AhVOFFkFHxsECQsQFnoECAwQAQ&url=https%3A%2F%2Fjournals.psu.edu%2Findex.php%2Fpmb%2Farticle%2Fdownload%2F28083%2F27839&usg=AOvVaw2xS-HK4fY3Dk1cBgB3IPT8>

It is believed that the Ferry was located in close proximity to the location now occupied by the old Pencoyd Iron Works trestle. This spot would have originally where Andrew Robeson's land met the land owned by Peter Righter on the Roxborough side on the Schuylkill River (later named the Righter then the Jones Ferry). This location was researched to show that the "Ferry House" noted on some maps was not the Robeson's Rolling Mill. Map below link: **1750/1753** A map of Philadelphia and parts adjacent <https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3824p.ct000294/>

Earlier, perhaps, than any other ferry north of Fairmount, was that which Andrew Robeson operated across the Schuylkill, from just above his mill, at the Wissahickon, to the Lower Merion shore. In 1723, the Court was asked to confirm a road of about 30 years' standing, leading from the market-place of Germantown to Conestoga road, by way of this ferry. Strange, to say, no action upon this petition seems to have been taken *for more than forty years!* Meantime, the property had changed hands, and Peter Righter, of Roxborough, in 1741, received a grant to maintain a ferry between his plantation and the opposite shore. This privilege was to hold good for seven years, and could be—and was—renewed periodically.

THE STONY PART OF SCHUYLKILL ITS NAVIGATION, FISHERIES, FORDS AND FERRIES.
BY CHARLES R. BARKER.



The road from Germantown to this ferry (School lane), together with its continuation through Lower

364 *The Stony Part of Schuylkill.*

Merion (Righter's Ferry road), was opened in 1765. Two years later, the present Monument road was laid out to the ferry, and thence extended up-stream to Levering's mill. A petition of this period refers to "one of the first Established Ferrys on Schuylkill (and since confirmed by Patent to Peter Righter)."

1693 Continued: The Robeson Rolling Mill may have been built to be used intermittently as a grain way station or warehouse as well as a Mill.

A document* by Horatio Gates Jones Jr. made an interesting observation about the early use of warehouses:

“Access to Robeson’s (*the large Wissahickon Mill*) was of course quite convenient by means of the Schuylkill River, for farmers who lived in the interior on the Schuylkill were accustomed to send their grain down in long boats and sell it to the miller. **Several of the Wissahickon millers built warehouses on the banks of the Schuylkill**, where they were accustomed to store their grain and haul it away as it was needed.”

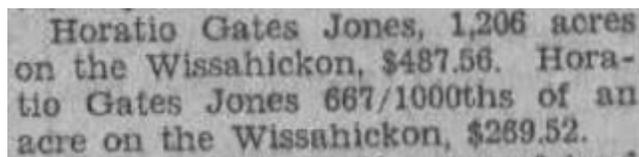
If the original “Corn Mill” was later used as a warehouse, this would explain why the “Robeson Rolling Mill” was not referenced explicitly in documents from 1701-1748 as a separate mill as it would be considered as an “appurtenance” in deeds after the large “Wissahickon Mill” replaced it as the main mill c 1700.

The Mill was perhaps an unnoticed appurtenance until later refitted a backup grist mill to the large Robeson Wissahickon Mill or converted to be a rolling mill – **see key 1748 deeds from Robeson family members, Rudeman and Magdalen Robeson to Henery Shellenberg, wherein the “Rolling Mill” is first mentioned.**

* *Notes from Manayunk, Wissahickon and Roxborough* by Horatio Gates Jones. Initially published in 1859 in the Manayunk Star, preserved by A.C. Chadwick, and republished in the Manayunk Sentinel in 1880. The 54 pages can be found here in this link to his Volume 48: [Chadwick Papers Volume 48.pdf \(wsimg.com\)](#)

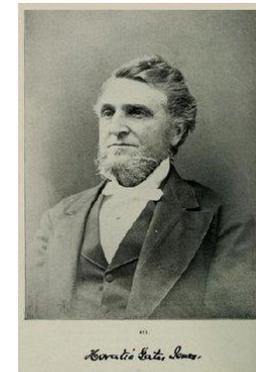
Horatio Gates Jones Jr. short biography: Born and died in Roxborough Township, b. 1822, d. 1893. Son of Deborah Levering and Rev. Horatio Gates Jones Sr. (pastor of the Lower Merion Baptist Church). Elected to the Pa. State Senate in 1874 and served for two terms. Secretary Historical Society of Pennsylvania 1849-1867 and VP 1867-1893. Honorary fellow of the Royal Historical Society and he spoke Welsh Fluently. Author of “The Levering Family, Or, A Genealogical Account of Wigard Levering and Gerhard Levering.”

Parents: Rev. Horatio Gates Jones, of Roxborough, Pastor of the Lower Merion Baptist Church, b. Feb. 11, 1777, in Tredyffrin Township, Chester Co., Pa., d 1853. **Mother Deborah Levering, b. 1791 and d. Sept. 9, 1823, at their home at Righter's Ferry, on the river Schuylkill, in Manayunk³²**



Horatio Gates Jones, 1,206 acres on the Wissahickon, \$487.56. Horatio Gates Jones 667/1000ths of an acre on the Wissahickon, \$269.52.

His large estate: 1869/1870 sales of land to the Park. “His father, the Rev. David Jones, was pastor of the Great Valley Baptist Church, and a Chaplain in the Revolutionary War.” And “ who was probably named in honor of the Revolutionary War general, Horatio Gates.”



Horatio Gates Jones 1822-1893

³² Sources Levering family history: [Full text of "Levering family : history and genealogy" \(archive.org\)](#) and [G004309.pdf \(seekingmyroots.com\)](#)

1693 Taxes:

In 1693, "Robeson & Saunders mill in Northern Liberties township³³ was taxed on a valuation of 550£ (Source has as 350£ see below).

Reported Original Source: Penn. Mag., Vol. 8, pp. 95 and 377³⁴. As reported here in the "An historical and genealogical account of Andrew Robeson, of Scotland, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and of his descendants from 1653 to 1916", by Osborne, Kate Hamilton, 1847- ed.: CTRL+CLCK <https://archive.org/details/historicalgeneal00osbo/pReportedage/10/mode/2up?q=liberties>

The First Tax List for Philadelphia County. 95

Mounce Cox Northern Liberty

		£199	17s.	11d.
Brought over	—	—	—	—
Daniel Pegg	250	1	0	10
Daniel Rugges	—	—	6	—

..... lower down....

Robert Stacy & Son	100	—	8	4
Ellis Jones Govern ^{rs} Mill	72	—	6	—
Robert Turner	200	—	16	8
Sam: ^{ll} Carpenter	50	—	4	2
Wid: ^o Bowyer	30	—	2	6
Evan Oliver	30	—	2	6
Peter Dale	—	—	6	—
Robeson & Sanders Mill	350	1	9	2

Other Mills found to be taxed: Parsons's 40 £ (Oxford), Governors Mill (above) Cohocksink Creek tax 72£.

It seems unlikely that the new, larger mill north of Ridge Road was completed by September of 1693, so the Mill would be the "Corn Mill" referenced in the 1691 Indenture. There was no separate section for Roxborough and, except for Governors Mill, no other mills on the Wissahickon were taxed based on "mills" in the list nor family names. Below is page 82, its being page 130 in the linked document.

....., was entitled "An act for granting to King William and Queen Mary the **rate** of one penny per pound upon... .. such as are not otherwise **rated** by this Act, to be employed by the Governor of this province of Pennsylvania... .. of the **rates** and assessments hereinafter mentioned, which we desire they will please to accept... .. to the use aforesaid after the **rate** of one penny per pound ; and to the end that this tax may be laid... .. and territories, who have been out of their servitude by the space of six months, and shall not be otherwise **rated** by this Act, nor worth one hundred pounds,....

on

³³ At that time, that part of Roxborough likely was considered as part of the "Liberty Lands" and then Northern Liberties for tax purposes, the latter being an established township within Philadelphia County and the two township lines meeting right about the Wissahickon Creek mouth.

³⁴ See page 142 in doc. Sign into www.familysearch.org then 'Search' > 'Books' and enter The Pennsylvania magazine of history and biography - v. 8 (1884) >'View Inside.'

1696 Narrative – Map is a 1777 creation by a University of Pennsylvania Project. Text is from James F. Magee Jr. describing this slice of the Park that J. Vandereen came to own in 1755/1760. This narrative and the map of eight acres are of particular interest due to the unusual Court Order referenced below.

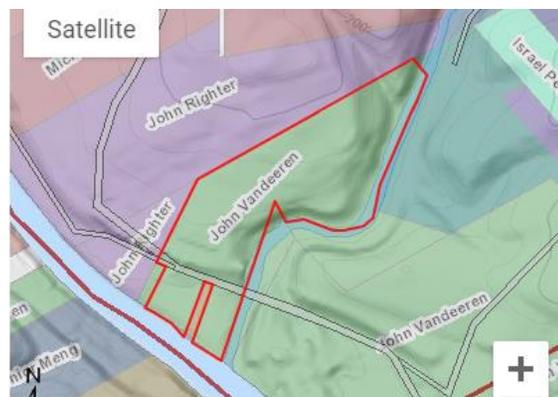
CTRL+CLICK: <https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/36b02456-d805-4506-9c7c-16f7354b4fb8/downloads/Chadwick%20Papers%20Volume%2036.pdf?ver=1591910278900>

"In 1696 Samuel Robeson, executor for his father, sold his half interest in the 200 acres of western Sumac [sic] Park and the mills to his cousin, Andrew Robeson 2nd. The 300 acres of the eastern section were sold to Joseph and Benjamin Morgan. In 1703, Sara Saunders [sic], widow (of Charles Saunders), wished to sell her half interest in the 200 acres and mills to Andrew Robeson 2nd, but the court decided that the 8 acres at the mouth of the Wissahickon could not be divided, so she retained her half interest in the 8 acres, but sold another 96 acres to Andrew Robeson 2nd. At this date, a corn mill and sawmill were mentioned as "The Wissahickon Mills"." (Funds for the sale of the 96 acres, and the half interest in the 8 acres, being 500 Pounds, actually were paid to John Vanlaer, who purchased said land and rights in 1702 from Samuel Robeson, son of Andrew Robeson, Jr.)



Parcel Details

Owner Name: John Vandereen
Township: Roxborough
Year Acquired: 1755
Deeded Land Area: 8 acres
Source: I 12.418



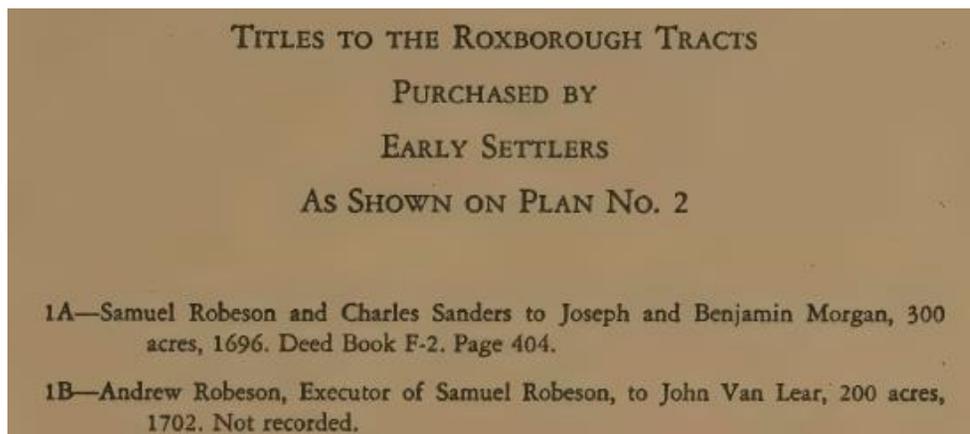
Owner Name: John Vandereen
Township: Roxborough
Deeded Land Area: 53 acres

[Return to parcel map](#) or [browse landowner data](#)

In addition to keeping the half interest in the 8 acres with the mills, Sarah Saunders was given 96 acres in the partitioning, being the 53 acres shown on the left as owned in 1777 by John Vandereen, plus the plot owned by John Righter, being 6 acres, plus two one acre lots, and various other lots farther upstream.

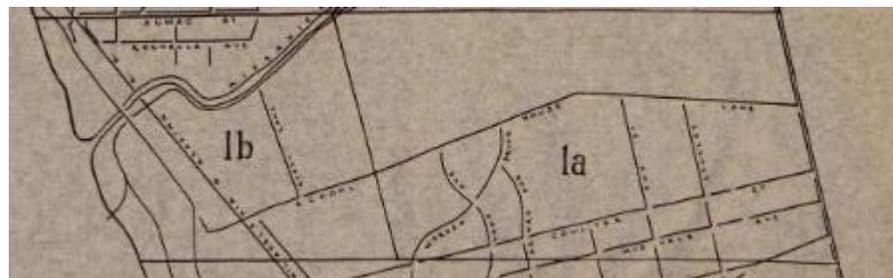
1696 – 500 acre estate split - **Caution: there are dates, spellings and deed transfers noted below that conflict with other sources.**

The below comes from the book by **Joseph Starne Miles and Rev. William H. Cooper** "A Historical Sketch of Roxborough Manayunk Wissahickon" 1940. Map roads from 1850's it appears Sources: https://ia802303.us.archive.org/11/items/historicalskech00mile/historicalskech00mile_djvu.txt
<https://archive.org/details/historicalskech00mile/page/54/mode/2up?ref=ol&q=map&view=theater>



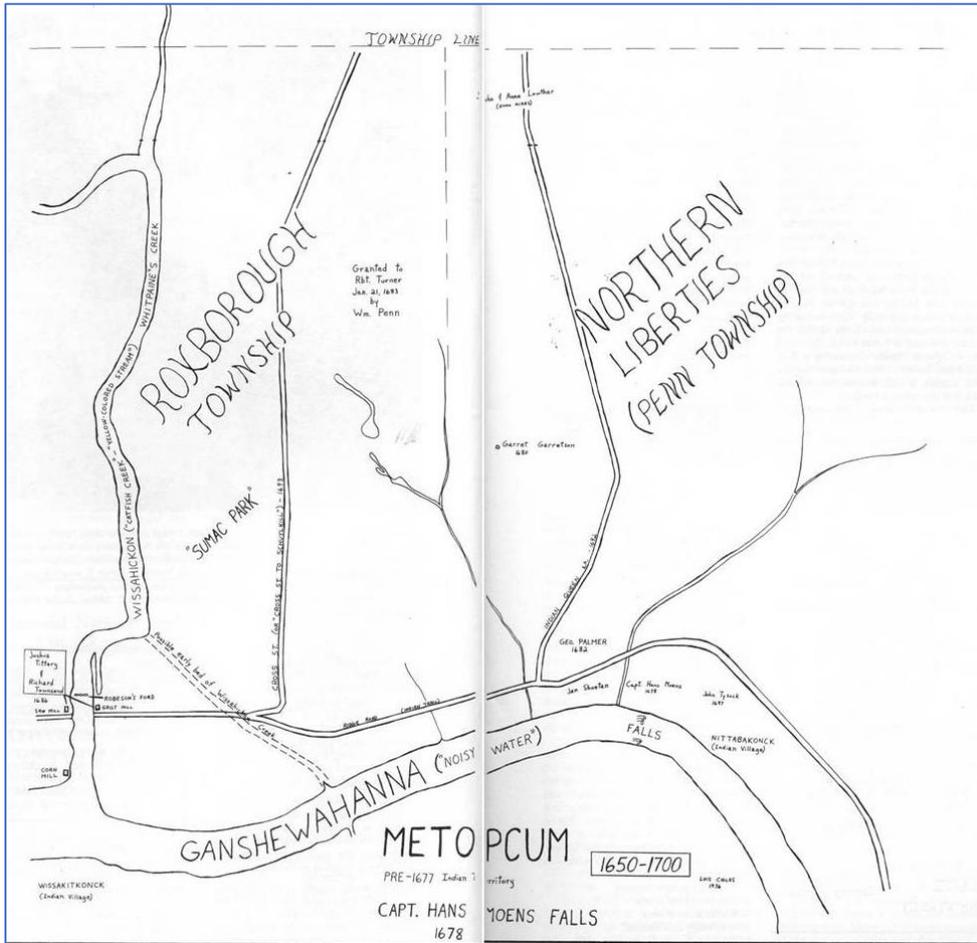
In 1686 Robert Turner **leased 50 1/2** acres of his tract to Joshua Tittery, broad glass maker, who took Richard Townsend, Millwright, into partnership and built the saw and corn mills near the mouth of the Wissahickon Creek. This was the first mill built along the Wissahickon.

The mills that Tittery and Richard Townsend built were known as the "Wissahickon Mills" and later as the "Robeson Mills" and the "Vandaren's [sic] Mills."

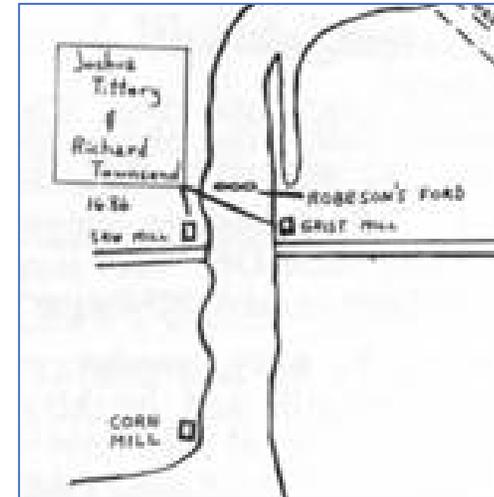


1689 Tittery and Townsend took a third partner in with them named John Tysache. **1691:** In **1691** Andrew Robeson and Chas. Saunders (*Charles*) purchased the mills and mill lands from Tittery, Townsend and Tysache and the entire 500 acres from Robert Turner.

In 1696 Joseph and Benjamin Morgan bought 300 of the 500 acres from Samuel Robeson and Chas. Saunders (*Charles*).



Bottom left is enlarged here. Note that the lower dam is referenced as “Robeson’s Ford”



The source of this map published by The East Falls Historic Society is still being researched. The “Saw Mill” location being North of Ridge Road is the first and only map found of a mill where it is North of Ridge vs. South of Ridge (Note that it is not a contemporaneous map). Pre-dating this source, James F. Magee references a map, which could not be found, and it states that a Saw Mill was located on the North side of the Creek and North of what became Ridge Road and before the bridge was built. While it makes sense to 1st build there since the water race could be very short, the site is high above the Creek and its water source, its race sluice gate on the Wissahickon hard to envision due to the elevation. The picture is dated 1923 and by then all but one of the mills on the Wissahickon had been demolished (almost all being a safety hazard). The building shown here to give a sense of the location. **See map “Year 1848” map for one of the best sources found as location of Mill #2, the “Saw Mill.”**

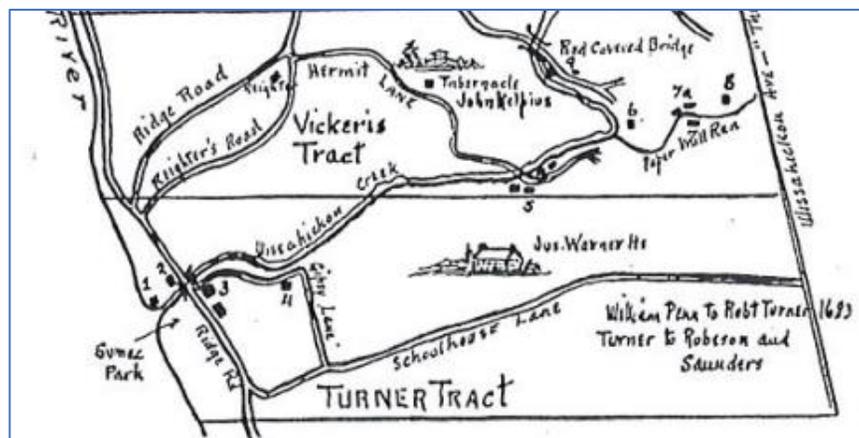
“Saw

1702 Writ of Partition - Dec 3 John Van Lear petition v William Sanders (*Document found in the Pennsylvania Historical Society, not the Phila. Archives – notable as the “Brief of Title” presented later for the Robeson/Vanderen lands that became the Dobson lands as part of the Fairmount Park purchase did not have access to this document.*)

Petition to divide lands jointly owned: “And Whereupon the Plaintiff sayeth that, whereas he the said Plaintiff and the Defendant together and without Division Do hold to them & their heirs One Water Corn Mill & Millns (Being three Grist Mills under one Roof) Commonly called or known by the name Wessahickon (*sic*) Mills with their appurtenances Together with Two hundred acres of land (on part whereof the Said Millns stand) with its appurtenances All situate lying and being in the County of Philadelphia.”

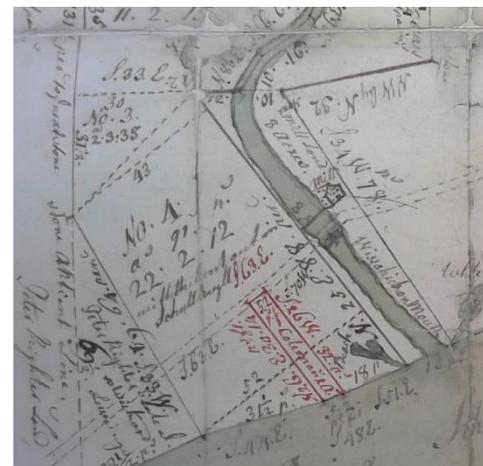
Due to the deaths of A. Robeson Sr. (1694) and William Saunders (1699) and the notable profitability of the operation of mills, a Court agreed division of the 200-acres had to be decided by a Writ of Partition overseen by the Sheriff & twelve freeman in 1702. The twelve men divided the land into about equally valued parts on the east and west sides of the Wissahickon Creek, **but they could not find an equitable way to divide the milling operations.** To solve this dilemma, they created an 8-acre lot with land on both sides of the Creek, from above the upper dam and stretching down to the Schuylkill River and containing all the Mills that had to remain under joint ownership until the owners could agree upon a better solution.

The Map from 1760 C. Lehman on right (not 1702). The eight acres of co-owned land was the remainder of the 200 acres split into two 96-acre plots. This eight-acre plot of land was not laid out or otherwise surveyed until 1760, although its boundaries were determined by the review the boundaries of the two 96-acre lots.



The map on the left was drawn c. 1932 by Douglas Macfarlan, author of *The Wissahickon Mills*. It shows the Corn Mill as #1 and the “Millns” (*sic*) with three wheels under one roof as mill #3.

The Saw Mill (#2) is not explicitly mentioned in the Writ of Partition, and it seems that it was consider an “appurtenance” as a building needed to support the Mills.



1703 Court of Common Pleas*: – The 200 acres are partitioned as follows:

4 March 1703 Common Pleas Court decree 8 Acres “could not be divided” as from the Robeson/Vanderan “**Brief of the Title**” of 1760s:

“The said Charles Sanders died leaving a Widow Sarah and one only son and Heir, William Sanders – and on **Writ of Partition at the suit of John Van Laer** against **the said Sarah and William Sanders in the Common Pleas of Philadelphia County**, Partition of the said Mills and Lands was made by the Sheriff and Inquest, By which Partition the tract a, b, c, d, e, f of 96 acres was allotted to the said Jon Van Laer³⁷ and his Heirs in severalty and the tract d, e, g, f, h, i, k, of **88* acres**³⁸ was allotted to the said Sarah and William Sanders in severalty – **and the Mills with 8 Acres of Estover Land**³⁹ **could not be divided the and therefore remained to them in common** – **which partition was returned to and confirmed by the Court the 4th day of March 1703.**”

John Vanlaer gets 96 acres on the South side of the Creek – being same 96 acres that John Vandeeren comes to own in 1755 – and half of the 8 acres. The map is from UPenn 1777 map series.

Beginning at a Walnut Tree 2 perches (33 feet) below Wissahickon Creek and then

1. down by the Schuylkill 83. perches to the Spanish oak for a corner.
2. Thence East NE 180 perches to a stake upon a hill of stones.
3. Thence North. West by North 85 purchase to a black oak.
4. Thence West South West 124 perches through a black oak Sapling.
5. Thence Northwest and by North 32 purchases to a Spruce Tree.
6. Thence South 54 degrees West 78 perches.

To the place of beginning containing 96 acres, be it more or less.

***NOTE: It is unclear how the “Brief of Title” prepared from city and deed book records for the Fairmount Park purchase came to say that Sarah and William Sanders (her son) owned only 88 acres** on the west side of the creek (and half of the 8 acres that lie in between) as opposed to 96 acres in the Writ of Partition.



³⁷ The South / East side of the Wissahickon.

³⁸ The North / West side of the Wissahickon.

³⁹ The right of taking necessary wood and stone for the use or furniture of a house or farm, from off another's estate.

1706 Page reserved for updates on research from 1706 to the time the first Ridge Road bridge over the Wissahickon was built (tbd) vs. there being a simple ford crossing.

Road Dockets: Road Dockets book Vol 2 pages 27, 31 and 32 <https://archive.org/details/historicalskech00mile/page/16/mode/2up?ref=ol&q=1681&view=theater>

In the March sessions of Quarter Sessions Court 1706 "The petition and humble request of the inhabitants of Plymouth Township humbly pray the Honorable Bench to grant them a common Cartway or Road to extend from Wissahickon Mills up into Perkioming Creek at Edward Lane's and others. The Court ordered Matthew Holgate, Thomas Stroud, Johannes Custis, John Redwitcher, Wm. Harmon and John Jacob to lay out the same agreeable to the prayer of the Petitioners."²

In the same year, pursuant to this order, Thomas Fairman, the Surveyor, certified to the Court that he had laid out such a road, describing in detail the directions and distances.³

"Wissahickon Mill" stood on the southern side of Wissahickon Creek, a short distance above the mouth and was owned by Andrew Robeson, one of the early pioneers. Edward Lane lived at this time at Collegeville and kept the first hotel where now stands the Perkiomen Bridge Hotel, built in 1701. It still stands a venerable and picturesque old inn.

"Where the Perkiomen Bridge now crosses the creek, was known as 'Philip's Ford.'

"On Feb. 21, 1797, the Legislature passed 'an Act for raising, by way of lottery, the sum of \$20,000. to be applied to the erection of a stone arched bridge on the Perkiomen on the road leading from Philadelphia to Reading.' The contract for the work was given in 1798. At the end of the year the County had spent \$34,683.12 and the bridge was only one-half completed. The bridge was finished in 1799 in

"This bridge..." referenced below on the left is to the Perkiomen bridge. From 1706 to 1750, no references were found in The Philadelphia County Road Dockets to build a 'Ridge Road' bridge over the Wissahickon. The land contained a bridge that the owners built on their own very early on as they owned the land on both sides of the Wissahickon and farmers needed the road to take grains to the mills. Ridge Road later became the "Ridge Turnpike Company" in 1811, when Robeson's sons owned the land and a toll booth existed on the bridge.

the style it now stands and cost \$60,000."

Was ever anything built within the estimated cost?

This bridge stands today a monument to those who built it and of design and workmanship worthy of being followed by present-day architects and engineers.

In the June Session of 1706 "upon Petition of several of the inhabitants of Merion, Radnor, Plymouth and Roxborough setting forth that there was formerly laid out and surveyed by order of the Court directed to Thomas Fairman, the Surveyor, a certain road leading from Wisahickon Mill land and the City of Philadelphia—yet remained unconfirmed—and that the said Road ever since has been and now is the Usual Road from the several Townships above named to the City of Philadelphia and pray that this Court be pleased to order and appoint Thomas Fairman to resurvey the said Road and to make return thereof at the next session here to be held, in order to be confirmed."¹

The Court complied with the request and in the June Session 1707 Thomas Fairman reported that he "had laid out a certain road from Philadelphia, through the Northern Liberties to the Mill at Wissahickon, beginning at Sassafras Street² where the Sixth Street intersects," describing in detail the directions and distances.³

In 1709 a petition signed by John Henry Sprogel, Morris Jones and others recites that they had "plantations lying very remote in the country and on the edge or outskirts of any inhabitants of the country and no public road, they therefore pray for a road from the late house of Edward Lane, deceased, being in the Queens Highway, with Maunitauna etc." The Court complied with the request and the Ridge Road was extended to Manatawny, now Pottstown.

The Ridge Road through Roxborough at present, from Wissahickon to the County Line, follows almost identically the lines laid out in 1706, with the exception of that part from the foot of the hill at Wissahickon to the top at Hermit Lane.

¹ Road Dockets, Vol. 2, page 31.

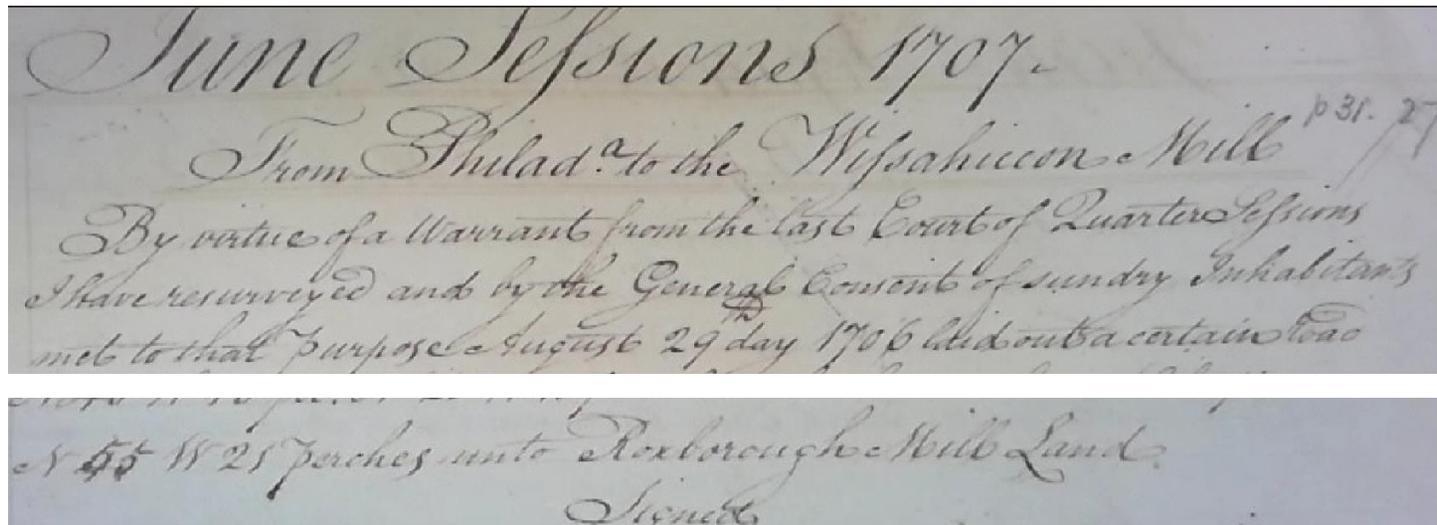
² Race Street.

³ Road Dockets, Vol. 2, page 32.

1706 – 1714 Road Docket⁴⁰ references with many various names of Ridge Avenue. See 1752 map and note another variation of the name of Ridge Avenue was give as “Wissahiccon Road.”.

1706 from prior page: Thomas Fairman was ordered to lay out a road from the mouth of the Wissahiccon to the Perkiomen at Collegeville, largely for the hauling of lime from Plymouth township. It has been called "The Great Road that leads from Plymouth to Philadelphia," the "King's Road leading to Philadelphia," "the King's Highway," "the Plymouth Road," the "Manatawney or Great Road," the "Reading Road," and the "Great Road leading from Philadelphia to Reading."

1707: June Sessions – Court of Quarter Sessions – Road Docket. Opening line: **“From Philadelphia to the Wissahickon Mill.”** Closing Line after surveyor’s description of the road **“...West 25 perches unto Roxborough Mill Land.”** Point of including this survey docket here is to note that the large Mill on the north side of Ridge is referred to explicitly while the old area and land on which the original mill was constructed is referred to as being on “Roxborough Mill Land.”



1714 erection of the Shoomac Park House: <https://silo.tips/download/old-towns-and-districts-of-philadelphia> . In 1811 "The Ridge Turnpike Company" was incorporated, and it became the Ridge Road, and later Ridge "avenue." Near the point where it starts to climb is Wissahickon, a village founded by officials of the Pencoyd Iron Works, with a railroad station on the Norristown branch of the Reading, now the main passenger route to Reading. **To the right, as one enters the Wissahickon drive from Ridge Avenue, stands the house known as Shoomac Park, built about 1714 by Andrew Robeson. (Jr.)**

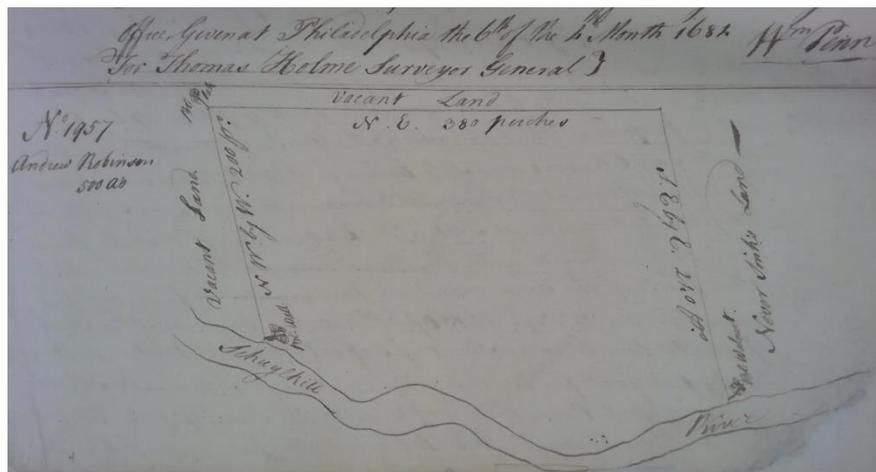
1714 See Page 122 (pg. 42 in pdf) of “Old Towns and Districts of Philadelphia” by WILLIAM BUCKE CAMPBELL, A.M, Philadelphia History Vol. IV, No. 5 City History Society of Philadelphia, 1942, F158.68

⁴⁰ “As early as 1683, the Pennsylvania General Assembly passed legislation requiring the county court in every county to appoint highway overseers with the power to summon inhabitants to make and mend highways and bridges. Generally speaking, residents were required to perform four to six days of service in building and maintaining roads. Residents had the option of paying a fine instead; the money collected was used to hire laborers to undertake the work (Kaja 2011:127-128). Worlds in Motion: Internal Development and the Evolution of Transportation Systems in Early Pennsylvania, 1680-1800. Unpublished dissertation, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor. cited by - Road and Highway Resources of Southeastern Pennsylvania, 1681-1970 https://gis.penndot.gov/CRGISAttachments/Survey/DRAFT2_3-28-2013-Southeastern_SE_PA_Transportation_National_Register_MPDF.pdf

1714 - 1720 Robeson Family and the Iron Industry

1714: Andrew Robeson Jr. acquires 500 acres on the Schuylkill River from Thomas and Richard Penn in what is now Berks County (was then still part of Philadelphia County – County Letter R No. 1957 surveyed by Thomas Holme). Later, No. 1958 records an additional 500 acres yet to be surveyed.

In addition to the land in the Wissahickon Valley, at his death in 1719, Andrew Robeson Jr. left 2,300 acres of land to five of his sons. The eldest son, Andrew III inherited his interests in the 200 acres in Roxborough.



1718⁴¹: "The son Andrew (*Robeson III*), and daughter Magdalen, both married in 1718, and the father (*Andrew Jr.*) and other members of the family removed to the vicinity of Amity, in the Manatawny region Pa. (*now Berks County*) where Andrew, the father, joined **Magdalen's husband, Thomas Potts**, in developing the newly opened iron industry of that region; Andrew holding large grants of land there, on either side of the river Schuylkill.

The son Andrew had remained at the homestead and continued running the mill, and the son Israel was already married and settled in Manatawny region before the death of the mother, and later engaged in the iron industry with his father."

1720 Thomas Potts: Thomas Potts (husband of Magdalen Robeson) and Thomas Rutter were the builders and owners of "Colebrookdale Furnace was Pennsylvania's first cold blast furnace. Blast furnaces replaced earlier furnaces and forges in iron production because they produced better quality and larger quantities of iron. The site helped start the Pennsylvania iron industry and played a significant role in the state's early development of iron production."⁴²

Point & Family Connections: By 1718 Andrew Robeson III was running the mills in Philadelphia (that he came to own half of in 1720) and his sister was married to a co-owner of the first furnace in Pennsylvania to produce iron bars⁴³. The use of this iron in the Robeson Rolling Mill to produce nails & other metal is a plausible reuse of what was originally a corn mill. Andrew's brother Jonathon went on to build the Oxford iron furnace in New Jersey in 1742.

⁴¹ [An historical and genealogical account of Andrew Robeson, of Scotland, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and of his descendants from 1653 to 1916 : Osborne, Kate Hamilton, 1847- ed : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive](#)

⁴² See reference and map here: [Colebrookdale Furnace - 1720 \(steelmuseum.org\)](#)

⁴³ [ExplorePAHistory.com - Stories from PA History Iron Industry](#)

1719 – 1756 The Conrad-Holgate Mills. Picture c. 1900 from the Showmaker Collection; the mill was on the Cresheim Creek just south of the point where Lincoln Drive re-starts. Matthew Houlgate purchased land in 1698 and the mill was built by 1720; it was demolished 1906 by Geo. Woodward.

Matthew Houlgate⁴⁴ (or Holgate) was likely the same person as one of the “twelve freemen” who adjudicated the 1702 “Writ of Partition” of the eight-acre lot.

The Conrad-Holgate Mills picture is provided as the Mill has the same roof design as the Robeson Rolling Mill. Bischoff’s Mill on Bells’ Mill Road, built in 1710 as a grist mill, also had the same relatively flat roof design. (Note: it cannot be stated definitively that either mill’s roofs were not altered after their original construction.) See also the Upper Magarge Paper Mill and the Old Fitzwater Mill for similar roof designs: [Chadwick Papers Volume 36A pgs 23 and 53](#). The mill was a fulling mill “that cleaned, shrunk and strengthened cloth woven at home.”⁴⁵



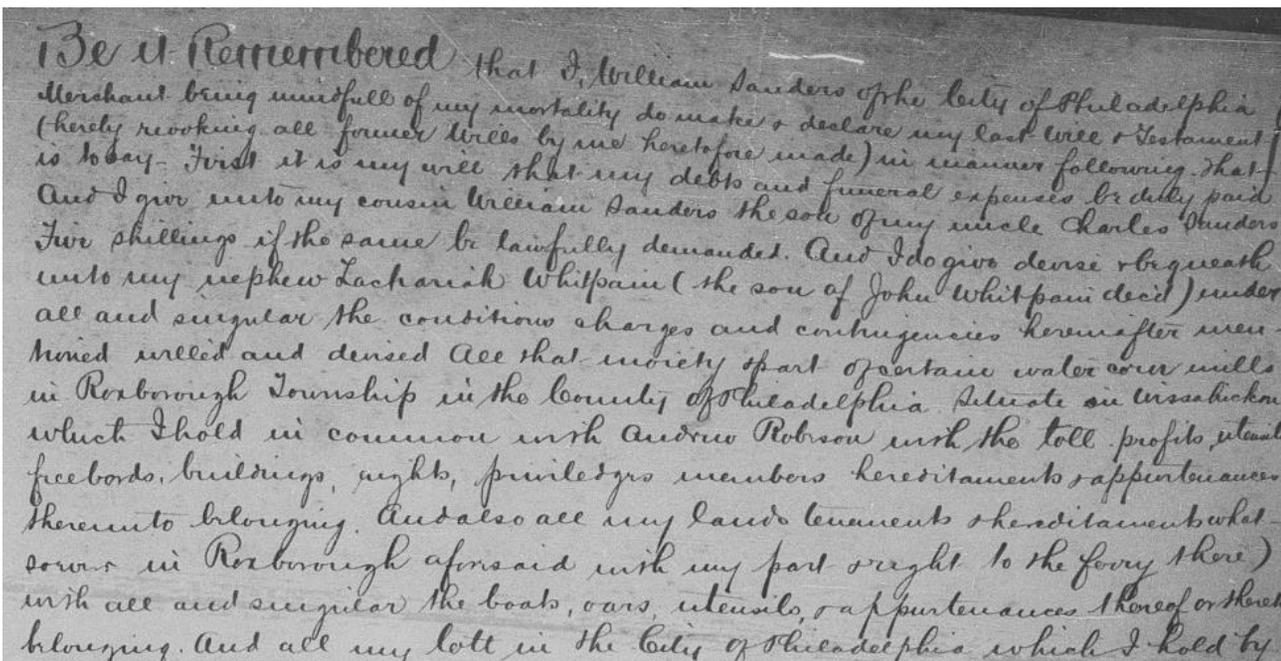
⁴⁴ Mathew Houlgate, Sr., bought John Jennett's tract in 1698, extending from the Schuylkill River, to the line of Germantown township, and prior to 1720, erected a fulling mill on the Wissahickon, below Conrad's Lane. the ruins of this mill have lately been covered up by the workmen engaged in making the Wissahiccon turnpike. '!'his family erected the stone dwelling, now owned by George Markle, on Rittenhouse (Red Bridge) Lane. Page 187: [G004309.pdf \(seekingmyroots.com\)](#) Also see [page 317 A history of American manufactures from 1608 to 1860 ... comprising annals of the industry of the United States in machinery, manufactures and useful arts, \(umich.edu\)](#)

⁴⁵ “Philadelphia's Wissahickon Valley, 1620-2020: Metropolitan Paradise, the Struggle for Nature in the City” by David R. Contosta, and Carol Franklin. See also in Chapter 4, page 16, the drawing of the Upper Magargee Mill, built in 1737, with a relatively flat sloped roof. See also roof design of **Bishop’s Mills** next to Bell’s Mill Road: [Bishop's Mills on the Wissahickon. \[graphic\]. | Library Company of Philadelphia Digital Collections](#)

1733 the Will of William Saunders, son of Charles and Sarah, Will Book E page 275 Will No 354 <https://www.familysearch.org/records/images/image-details?place=11027603&page=1&endDate=1733&startDate=1699&rmsId=TH-909-52823-93766-60&imageIndex=556&singleView=true>

Multiple Corn Mills and Toll Profits: Top section references the "...certain water corn mills (*corn mills plural*) in Roxborough Township..." and also "... the **toll profits...**" which would seem to be for the "tolls" collected for crossing their bridge to connect the two parts of Ridge Road over the Wissahickon Creek.

Transcription starting mid-sixth line, a new sentence:



Be it Remembered that I, William Saunders of the City of Philadelphia Merchant being mindful of my mortality do make & declare my last will & Testament (herby revoking all former Wills by me heretofore made) in manner following that And I give unto my cousin William Saunders the sole of my uncle Charles Saunders Five shillings if the same be lawfully demanded. And I do give devise & bequeath unto my nephew Zachariah Whitpain (the son of John Whitpain dec'd) under all and singular the conditions charges and contingencies hereafter mentioned willed and devised All that moiety part of certain water corn mills in Roxborough Township in the County of Philadelphia situate in Wissahickon which I hold in common with Andrew Robeson with the toll profits, utensils freebords, buildings, rights, privileges members hereditaments & appurtenances thereto belonging. And also all my lands tenements hereditaments whatsoever in Roxborough aforesaid with my part right to the ferry there) with all and singular the boats, oars, utensils, & appurtenances thereof or thereto belonging. And all my lott in the City of Philadelphia which I hold by

"And I do give, devise & bequeath unto my nephew Zachariah Whitpain (son of John Whitpain deceased) under all and singular the conditions charges and contingencies hereafter mentioned, willed and devised, all that moiety part of certain **water corn mills** in Roxborough Township in the County of Philadelphia situate in Wissahickon which I hold in common with Andrew Robeson, with the **toll profits**, utensils, (tbd – freebords ?), buildings, rights, privileges, tbd, hereditaments & appurtenances thereto belonging.

And also, all my land, tenements & hereditaments whatever in Roxborough aforesaid, with **my part right to the ferry shore with all and singular the boats, oars, utensils & appurtenances thereto belonging.**"

The first bequest to Z. Whitpain is for the 8 acres held "in common with Andrew Robeson" (III), son of Andrew Robeson Jr., in which the corn mills lay and, it appears, a toll bridge.

The second bequest gives Z. Whitpain⁴⁶ the 96 acres. William Whitpain came to own when the original 200 acres was partitioned in 1702 or 1703 at the request of Jon Vanlaer⁴⁷, by the Sheriff & twelve freeman^{xi}, and approved by the court. In that partition, Sarah (mother of William) and Wm. Whitpain received 88 acres on the west side of the Wissahickon and half (moiety) ownership of the "mills and 8 acres" that could not be equitably divided. John Vanlaer⁴⁸ received the other half interest in the 8 acres and mills, and 96 acres. The remaining eight acres were either now considered part of the public Ridge Road & School House Lane and some acres lost to re-surveys. In 1753, Dec 26, Zachariah's widow, Sarah, sold the 88 acres and her half interest in the 8 acres to Weckhard Levering.

⁴⁶ There was a Zachariah Whitpain who arrived in 1682 on 'The Welcome' with William Penn, likely this Zacharia's Grandfather: [Genealogies Details — FamilySearch.org](#).

⁴⁷ Likely Johannes Vanlaer, Baker, b. 1667 d. 1722: [Genealogies Details — FamilySearch.org](#) and [John Van Laer Family Tree • FamilySearch](#)

⁴⁸ His son married Prescilla (or Priscilla) Preston, daughter of Ann (nee Taylor) & William Preston: [Descendants of Daniel Hartung and Elizabeth Keen \(familysearch.org\)](#) Preston is mentioned in the 11 July 1691 Deed and Preston's reported Occupation was mason and builder: [Genealogies Details — FamilySearch.org](#) Elsewhere: Master Builder [John Van Laer \(1690–Deceased\), Priscilla Preston \(1693–1720\) • Landscape View • Family Tree • FamilySearch](#)

1733 – Map is from 1777 UP project, land owned as of 1755. Additional text, continued from 1696, is from James F. Magee Jr. describing this slice of the Park.

<https://img1.wsimg.com/blobby/go/36b02456-d805-4506-9c7c-16f7354b4fb8/downloads/Chadwick%20Papers%20Volume%2036.pdf?ver=1591910278900>



“Of the 21 Colonial mills erected on the Wissahickon and its branches in Roxborough and Germantown Townships, but one building remains today⁴⁹, and that is the famous mill built on the above mentioned 8 acres (1696-year prior section mention) of land at the confluence of the Schuylkill River and the Wissahickon creek.

This mill was built before 1733 and then called "the Wissahickon Grist and Bolting Mill", but before 1748 it became known as "The Roxborough Mill."⁵⁰ From 1703 until 1743, the 8 acres were owned jointly by the heirs of Andrew Robeson 2nd, Charles Saunders (*his heirs*). The mill is first mentioned in the will of William Saunders⁵¹ in 1733 "a grist mill-two pair of stones under one roof named the Wissahickon Mills⁵², erected on 8 acres of land". In 1748 the mill was rented to Thomas Tilberry."⁵³

Note: It is believed that the Mill was likely originally a Blacksmith Shop⁵⁴ or nail mill. More follows on references to it as this type of mill in year 1815. Below is a postscript from a Douglas Macfarlan article that is being research – the Robeson land ownership:

Andrew Robeson, 2nd (1654–1719), married Mary Spencer in 1685. She is buried in Gloria Dei (Old Swedes') Church yard, while her husband was buried at St. Gabriel's Swedish Church in Douglassville on the Schuylkill. Andrew 2nd was judge of Gloucester County, N. J. in 1692 and Chief Justice of Pennsylvania (1693–1699). In 1714 he purchased 1,000 acres of iron ore land near Reading where with Thomas Potts, whom his daughter Magdalena married, he promoted the newly developed iron industry in that neighborhood. He was chiefly responsible for opening up the Ridge Road from the city to his iron mines at Manatawny.

(There is a great deal more about the slice of 8 acres on the map in year 1755-1757.)

⁴⁹ Written 1933-1934 – or Robeson's Rolling Mill

⁵⁰ Reference here is to all three mills as two Mill-stones "under the same roof" as of 1733.

⁵¹ Sarah (Sara) Saunders died in 1733 (then married to Griffiths Owen). Charles Saunders died 1699 had a son William (1698 – 1726) so it seems likely the 1733 reference is to Sarah's Will. https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/family-tree/person/tree/168039769/person/152208815972/facts?ssrc=&queryId=092f747e05dd0bdc88a8791bc361d0ad&ml_rpos=3

⁵² This is unclear but seems to be a reference to the flour mill North of Ridge to south of the Creek. It seems highly unlikely that the race of water into Canoe Club Mill carried enough water for two or three mill stones. More on the water flow question comes up in the 1822 era.

⁵³ This reference is per the deed of Eliz. Robeson's 1/3 share of half the estate to her brother Rudman Robeson in 1748.

⁵⁴ See last page Macfarlan article: <https://freedombackyard.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/Old-Inns-and-Taverns-of-the-Great-Road-June-1952.pdf>

1734 – 1789: The Colonial Years & Revolutionary War

1742 – First Rolling Mills in New Jersey and in Pennsylvania

New Jersey: The first two furnaces (Tinton Falls and Mount Holly) extracted ore from bogs in South Jersey, impure deposits called bog iron. Oxford furnace, at Oxford, in Warren county, on a branch of the Pequest River, was **built by Jonathan Robeson** in 1742, the first constructed at a site where iron ore was mined. Tradition says that it was first blown by a water-blast. Cannon balls were cast at this furnace in the French war of 1755 /and for the Continental army.

Oxford Furnace produced a variety of products, including Pig iron: This was the primary product of the furnace. It was used to make a variety of other products, including tools, weapons, and construction materials such **as nails**. This last point is important as reports of the Robeson Rolling Mill producing nails has been found in historical accounts of the mill.⁵⁵

Pennsylvania⁵⁶: "The first absolute proof that the forge was erected is the petition of Obadiah Bonsall for license to keep a tavern in Thornbury (Delaware County, Pa.), dated August 31, 1743, on "the road leading from the French Creek Iron Works to Thornbury Forge," in which he uses as his argument for the erection of the inn at that place the fact that there were "many people resorting to and working at and near to the Forge." Another indication that the forge was erected previous to 1746 is that on January 18, 1745, John Taylor made an agreement with Thomas Wills, forgerman and finer, to work in the forge for two years in making anconits (*sic*) at 22s. 6d. per ton. The only way to effect a partial agreement between the statements that John Taylor was an iron worker in 1742 and that the sheriff of Chester county reported that he built the rolling and slitting-mill in 1746, is to assert that his forge was his means of livelihood in 1742 and at that time designated by the sheriff the rolling and slitting mill was erected. James M. Swank, in his volume, "The Manufacture of Iron in all Ages," states that the enterprises conducted by John Taylor

"were upon an extensive and varied scale, and included the manufacture of nails as well as nail rods. The tradition is preserved by his descendants that soon after the erection of the slitting mill, his store-keeper, in making one of his periodical visits to England to replenish his stock, surprised the Liverpool merchants by telling them that he could buy nails at Taylor's mill at lower prices than they quoted,-a revelation which added weight to the clamor then prevailing in England for the suppression of slitting-mills and similar iron establishments in America, and which agitation resulted in the passage in 1750, of an act of Parliament, which prohibited the further erection of such works."

⁵⁵ Chadwick Papers Volume 81 conv 37



⁵⁶ [Jordan's V1 PG4 HISTORY OF DELAWARE COUNTY, PA, 1914 \(genealogytrails.com\)](http://genealogytrails.com)

1748 Sep 22 Zachariah Whitpaine Deed to Magdalen Robeson⁵⁸

Key Property Description: "...Corn or Grist Mills or Millns [*sic* – see *the Glossary*] (now being two grist mills with two pairs of Stones under one Roof) sometimes called or known by the name Wissahickon Mills and now called Roxborough Mills with their Appurtenances..." "Mill Races" in the plural form.

See discussion in the Glossary as one or both of the "or" words above should be "&."

Magdalen Robeson (b. 1687 d. 1764): In **1718** Magdalen became the 2nd wife of Thomas Potts, a key leader in the development of the early iron industry in what is now Berks County and Robeson Township.

⁵⁸ [Deeds \(Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania\), 1683-1886 ; index to deeds, 1683-1916; ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSN1-D9NS-K?i=325&cat=227024 \(familysearch.org\)](#)

1750 – The “Iron Act of 1750” passed by the British Parliament on 5 May 1750.

The Act's had dual purposes; it sought to 1. encourage the production of raw iron in North America while 2. placing limitations and fines on the manufacturing of finished iron products in the colonies.⁵⁹

The Iron Act of 1750 imposed a fine of £200 on any person who manufactured finished iron products in the colonies. The act also prohibited the construction of new slitting mills, rolling mills, and steel furnaces in the colonies. These restrictions were intended to protect the interests of British iron manufacturers, who were concerned about the growing competition from colonial producers.

The Iron Act of 1750 was met with widespread opposition in the colonies. The colonists argued that the act was an infringement on their rights as British subjects. They also argued that the act would harm the colonial economy by driving up the cost of iron products. The act was eventually repealed in 1773.

There is no record of anyone in Pennsylvania being fined under the Iron Act of 1750. The act was unpopular in the colonies, and it was not strictly enforced. In fact, the Pennsylvania Assembly passed a resolution in 1751 declaring that the act was "repugnant to the rights of the people of this province."

⁵⁹ [The Iron Act \(1750\) \(alphahistory.com\)](http://alphahistory.com)

1750 A map of Philadelphia and parts adjacent <https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3824p.ct000294/> or <http://www.lowermerionhistory.org/atlas/scull.html>

Created / Published Philadelphia: N. Scull et al., 1752. The Ferry being upriver now occupied by the old Pencoyd Iron Works trestle. Note name of Ridge Avenue was give as "Wissahiccon Road." (Another good source: [A Map of Philadelphia and Parts Adjacent – Encyclopedia Virginia](#))



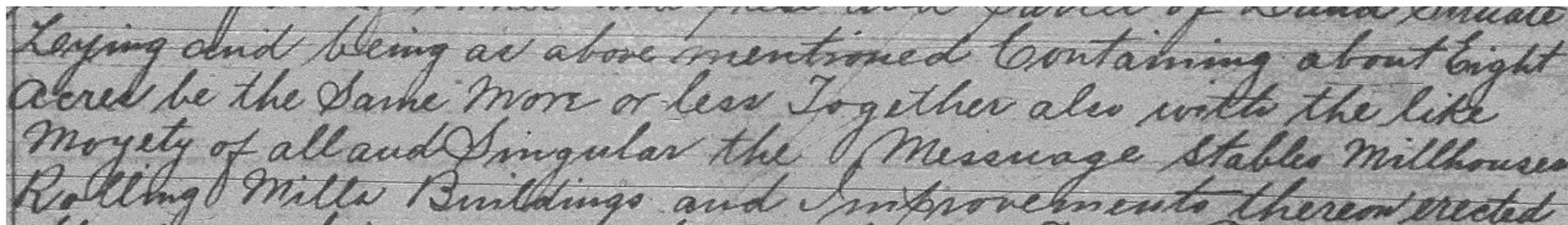
The Ferry: Andrew Robeson, Jr., continued to run the flour mill and in addition he operated a ferry from just above the mill across the Schuylkill to the Lower Merion shore. Then as now, Shoomac Park, standing at the head of the Wissahickon Valley, commanded an important crossroads. Travelers and waggons [sic] going northwest from Philadelphia moved up the Ridge Road (called Wissahickon Road on the Scull & Heap "Map of Philadelphia" 1750) by the Robeson house and mill, and waggons [sic] and horsemen going southwest from Germantown came to Robeson's ferry to cross the Schuylkill on their way to the Conestoga Road. Conversely, travelers from the back country, went past Robeson's on their way to Philadelphia and those living west of the Schuylkill, used his ferry to cross to the east side. By mid-century, the ferry was kept by Peter Righter and known as Righter's ferry.

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/master/png/habshaer/pa/pa0800/pa0884/data/pa0884data.pdf>

1752 Aug 22 Indenture Rudiman (or Rudeman) Robeson to Henry Shellenberg 96 acres and his Share of the Eight Acre Parcel. The 1752 May 22 Magdalen Robeson to Henry Shellenberg deed is essentially the same except it says more simply “Mills” in same place where the Rudiman deed says “Rolling Mills”.

Page 1 of original, handwritten transcription found in the City Archives: “...two pair of Stones under one Roof...” (*notice not three pair of stones as referenced in 1702*). “Called or known by the name of Wissahickon Mills and now called Roxborough Mills with the Appurtenances and also and in the like Moriety of a certain parcel of Land Containing about Eight Acres Situate in Roxborough Township aforesaid and next adjoining to the said Mills which Eight Acres by their Consent of the former Owner thereof were left for Estovers and Common for the necessary use and Service of the said Mills and he the said Andrew Robeson being so thereof seized died intestate leaving Issue three Children, to wit Andrew the said Robeson his sons and Elizabeth his only Daughter. And whereas the said Andrew Robeson the Son also died Intestate and without Issue before any Division or Distribution was made... Said Rudiman having a Double Share...” (*Concerns 96 acres, not the eight acre parcel – see page 2; Elizabeth received 1/3 share*).

Page 2: “And also the one full equal and undivided Moriety or half part of and with the Mill and Mills with two pair of Stones and part and parcel of Land Situate Laying and being on above mentioned Containing about Eight Acres be the same more or less Together also with the like Moriety of all and singular the Messuage, Stables, Millhouses, **Rolling Mills**, Buildings and Improvement thereon erected.”



Laying and being as above mentioned containing about eight acres be the same more or less Together also with the like Moriety of all and singular the Messuage Stables Millhouses Rolling Mills Buildings and Improvements thereon erected

1755-1757 Mapping West Philadelphia 1777 altered/widened at the mouth of the Wissahickon. <https://maps.archives.upenn.edu/WestPhila1777/view-parcel.php?pid=143>



Some deeds explain that select red boundary lines are in the “middle of” the Wissahickon Creek (see small map below), specifically being for lots above the turn of the creek above where the ‘upper dam’ lies and the race to Mill #3 started. Per the Deeds, the starting points & the straight lines up the Creek on both sides of the Creek shown on the 1777 map should be widened to include about 110 feet to the North West and include a slice of that side of the Wissahickon and thirty-three feet to the South. The 1777 maps are a great tool and the only reason for this proposed & detailed correction is to document that all the Mills built on both sides of the Creek have sufficient property and space to include the Saw Mill and the Canoe Club Grist Mill.

Based on the deeds listed below, the lengths of three of the four sides of the 8 acres were used to estimate the fourth side at the confluence of the Wissahickon & the Schuylkill:

05 Oct 1703 John Vanlaer & Sarah Saunders to Andrew Robeson (Jr.).

16 Dec 1753 Sarah Whitpain to Wechard Levering 88 acres

Side B-C from the 1753 deed on West side of the Creek going to NE from the Schuylkill River bank = 88 perches or 1,452 feet

Side C-D from the 1753 deed cutting across the Creek left to right = 22 perches or 363 feet

Side D-A from the 1703 deed going back down the Creek to the River = 77 perches or 1,287 feet.

There are 43,560 sq. feet in an acre and eight acres equals 348,480 sq feet.

Side A-B along the Schuylkill is then about fifty-eight meters, or 191 feet, and the southern boundary begins 2 perches Southeast of mouth of Wissahickon per the 1703 Deed. See Endnote for the ‘calculator’ used to decide and widen the A-B length.^{xii}



Map added to show how boundary lines above the upper dam follow the middle of the Wissahickon Creek.

1755 ownership: John Vandereen <https://maps.archives.upenn.edu/WestPhila1777/view-parcel.php?pid=143>

Year Acquired: 1755, Deeded Land Area: eight acres, Source: I 12.418 Deed book)



Mapping West Philadelphia: Landowners in October 1777

“Mapping West Philadelphia: Landowners in October 1777” is a web-based, geographic data application and is open to the public. It was developed by the University of Pennsylvania’s University Archives and Records Center from research provided by J.M. Duffin. The website is designed to assist scholarly research and the general public in efforts to analyze, interpret and understand the history of the growth of West Philadelphia and the greater Philadelphia area at the time of the American Revolution. *It is a work-in-progress which will be updated on a periodic basis as research for different parts of Philadelphia area is completed.*

Source: the primary source for the Owner Name, Year Acquired and parcel boundary data. Unless otherwise stated all sources that include alpha-numeric combinations (e.g., AM 54.522) are Philadelphia Deed Book references.

Robeson Genealogy continued

<https://archive.org/details/historicalgeneal00osbo/page/10/mode/2up?q=mill>

When Henry Shellenberger died, his widow sold their land to John Vandereen

(elsewhere Vandereen), June 8, 1755⁶⁰. He then bought a considerable part of the original property but toward the close of his life became deranged.

At his death, his estate was sold by the sheriff, and purchased Dec. 8, 1789, by Peter and Jonathan Robeson, brothers, and great-grandsons of Andrew Jr. They paid \$15,400 for 263 acres. Jonathan died in 1799, and Peter purchased his interest. Peter was married to Martha Livezey, daughter of Thomas and Martha Livezey who owned the Livezey Mill⁶¹ upstream on the Wissahickon.

1760: John Vandereen acquired the full interests in the mill in 1760.

It was this mill that was mentioned in Washington’s order to General Armstrong on the morning of the Battle of Germantown, Oct. 4, 1777 “to pass down the Ridge Road and take guides to cross the Wissahickon Creek above the head of John Van Deering’s mill dam.” It was also Vandereen’s Hill at Wissahickon, on the Ridge Road from Wissahickon Creek to Roxborough, to which Captain Parr was dispatched on the 19th of May 1778, to head off the British troops under General Grey from coming up the Ridge Road, when Lafayette was encamped at Barren Hill. In 1789 the mill and 263 acres of land were sold at sheriff’s sale to Peter and Jonathan, Robeson. *(For other background on the Battle of Germantown and the Mills see:*

<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-11-02-0404> and

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/master/pnp/habshaer/pa/pa0800/pa0884/data/pa0884data.pdf>)Source as a .pdf:

<https://ia802303.us.archive.org/11/items/historicalskech00mile/historicalskech00mile.pdf>

⁶⁰ Sources Vandereen purchase per the West Phila. 1777 project by date, acres and deed book: 1755 **96 acres Deed book: I 12.418 and 1755 8 acres Deed book I 12.418** Search on name Vandereen: <https://maps.archives.upenn.edu/WestPhila1777/browse-parcels.php>

⁶¹ For background: https://www.academia.edu/10056997/Thomas_Livezey_Pennsylvania_Merchant_Miller_Parts_1_5?email_work_card=reading-history

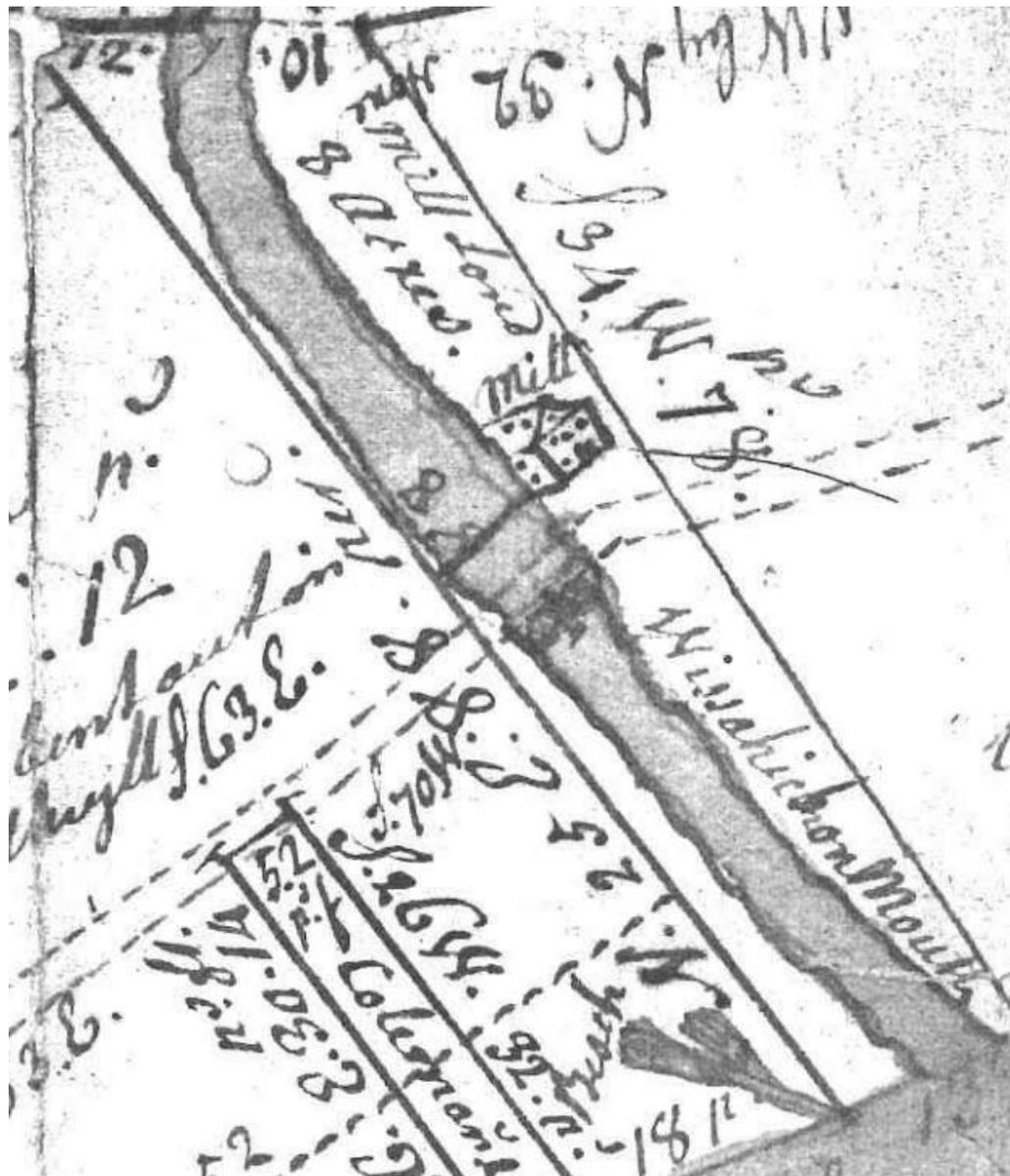
1760 Christian Lehman Plan. Lehman was the principal surveyor in the Germantown area in the mid-18th century.

This map has an enlarged section of the eight acres of interest on the next page. The Survey was completed as part of the sale of fifty-three acres by Wichard Levering to John Vanderen. The Robeson's Rolling Mill is not on the map, but neither is the Saw Mill which is named in many Deeds going back to 1691 and was, it seems, converted to a grist mill for a time – see the year 1733.



1760 Christian Lehman plan: Lehman was the principal surveyor in the Germantown area in the mid-18th century.

Here are the "Mill Land 8 acres" from the Survey. In addition to its missing the Saw Mill and the Robeson's Rolling Mill, no other buildings are on the map except upstream the 'new' Nicholas Rittenhouse & John Vanderen Mill is noted (Mill #4 on the Macfarlan maps).



1755-1757 Mapping West Philadelphia 1777. CTRL-CLCK: <https://maps.archives.upenn.edu/WestPhila1777/browse-parcels.php>
<https://maps.archives.upenn.edu/WestPhila1777/view-parcel.php?pid=142&popup=1>.



Parcel Details

Owner Name: John Vandeeren
Township: Roxborough
Deeded Land Area: 53 acres

[Close this window](#) to return to the map.



John Vanderen acquired most of the two hundred acres that Robeson and Saunders owned.

1777 Plan of the city and environs of Philadelphia Date January 1, 1777. <https://historicpittsburgh.org/islandora/object/pitt%3ADARMAP0350>

Engraved and published by Matthew Albert Lotter. 1777. This is **Lotter's version of the Scull & Heap map**, apparently issued in both English and German versions per Seller & van Ee [sic] #1322.



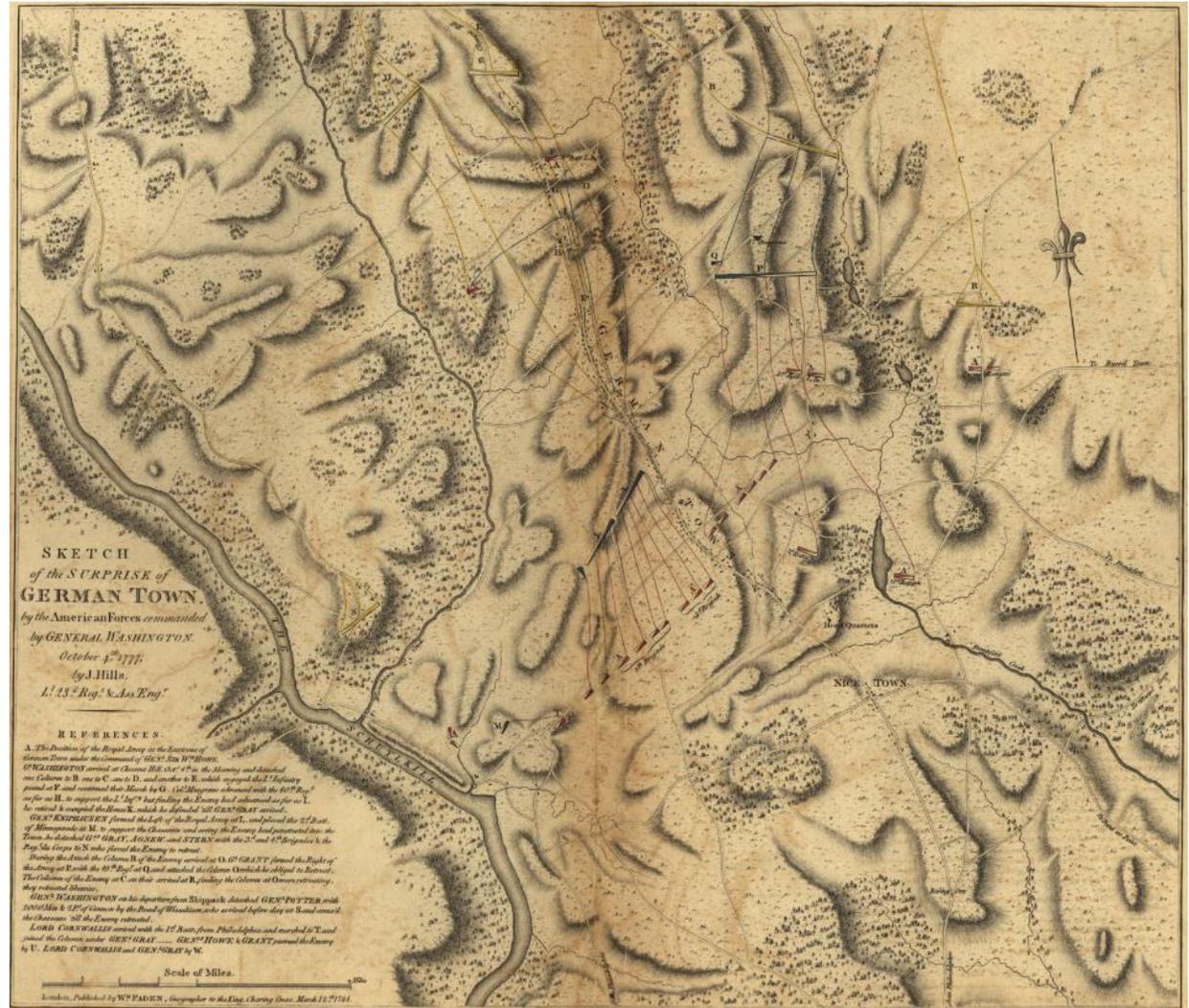
1777 British Ensign John Hill Map: published by William Faden (1784) Sketch of the Surprise at German Town by the American Forces Commanded by General Washington October 4th, 1777 (See also map Forts on the Delaware River⁶²)

The scale of the map is large and the detail outstanding, so the reader is encouraged to download the large .tiff version (10 MB), use Windows Photo Viewer or a comparable tool to zoom in to then see the Wissahickon Mill #3 on the Creek and see Mill #1 at the confluence of the Wissahickon Creek and The River⁶³.

Use the Harvard.edu version and zoom-in: [Sketch of the surprise of German Town by the American forces](#)

[commanded by General Washington October 4th, 1777 - Scanned Maps - CURIOSity Digital Collections \(harvard.edu\)](#)

Drawn by a British cartographer and discussed in this critical Endnote.^{xiii}



⁶² Map by Johann Martine Will – Forts on the Delaware River – less detailed map. See Article here: [Battle of Germantown – Part 2 – Revolutionary War Journal](#)

⁶³ Library of Congress site for download: [Sketch of surprise of Germantown, 4 October 1777 | Library of Congress \(loc.gov\)](#)

Chadwick's source of the below account of the action near the Mills during the Battle of Germantown is not known for sure, but it may well have been Horatio Gates Jones – see page 88 CTRL-CLCK [Historic notes of olden time in Roxborough and Manayunk \(familysearch.org\)](#).

An important engagement between the American and Hessian troops took place at the Ridge avenue end of the Wissahickon, near the Vandaren Mills, during the Battle of Germantown, on October 4th 1777.

Captain Ewald, of the Hessian forces, gave the following account of the engagement: "The alarm of Washington's approach having been given, a battalion of German Jagers was hurried to the bridge over the Wissahickon. The Jager Corps was attacked by 4000 men with four 6 pounders (General John Armstrong's account states the Americans only numbered 1500 men and two field pieces) Ewald goes on "So the corps was forced to leave the bridge, but took position on the hill opposite, and defended this post with its rifles against the repeated attempts of the enemy to force it. The enemy's ~~XXXXXX~~ four cannon played constantly on the Jagers, while our 3 pounders could not reach the enemy. Meantime firing ~~XXXXXX~~ became general and very strong on the right wing, until about nine o'clock (a.m.) when Lieutenant General Knyphausen sent us word that the enemy's left wing had been beaten. Hereupon Lieutenant Colonel Von Wurmb attacked the ~~xxx~~ bridge again and drove the enemy both from there and from the opposite heights, under a heavy fire. As the attack had been made through a long defile the enemy had time to retire." (Note position of Hessian redoubts in survey of 1850) The mills were considered of great value by the British army, and that their right wing was around Lukens Mill on the Wangohocking, and their left on the hills above Vandarens mill, is a coincidence, for both had been built by Richard Townsend about 1686.

⁶⁴ Note – Pages are not all in numeric order: [Chadwick Papers Volume 36.pdf \(wsimg.com\)](#)

1777 HEAT OF WAR IN THE ENVIRONS OF PHILADELPHIA: By Thos. Kitchin, Senior. Hydrographer to his Majesty. For the London Magazine 1777.

<http://www.mapsofpa.com/18thcentury/1777kitchin.jpg>

It appears here and, on another map, that there was a Ferry to the Northwest of Robeson's Rolling Mill where Robeson's land met Righter's land.



1778 Mill Disablement on George Washington's Orders

On the 1st of Feb., 1778, "George Washington ordered 27-year old Major John Jameson, in concert with 23-year old Brigadier General John Lacey to disable all the mills upon Pennepack & Wissahickon Creeks beginning on Sunday, 01 February 1778 with Morris' at Frankfort, Vanderen's on Wissahickon & Lewis' at Pennepack to reduce the food supply of British occupiers of Philadelphia." "As it will be impossible for you to remove the stones, I am advised to take off the spindles and saw off the spikes of the water wheels." ⁶⁵

A recap of Jameson's report back to Washington is below⁶⁶

Page 250

"To **Major John Jameson**," February 1, 1778, PGW, 13:437. 113. "From **Major John Jameson**," February 2, 1778, PGW, 13:440. Beginning on February 8, Jameson and Lacey began destroying the mills. By the eleventh, their task was complete.

And from Brigadier General John Lacey, Jr., Camp Warwick Bucks [Pa.] Febr 11th 1778.⁶⁷

Dear General, I must again trouble you with an account of my Inability, on account of my Numbers which is Reduced to between Sixty and a hundred, I have informed the President of the State of my Situation, but have not Yet Rec'd any Relief, or answer.

I have in Conjunction with Major Jameson party of Horse—Rendered the greatest part of the Mills Near the City entirely useless.

Postscript from a British Officer "William Howe's aide Captain Muenchhausen wrote in his diary on 8 Feb. that "This morning several small rebel detachments ruined all the mills between our lines and their position. This does not hurt us very much because we are always sure of provisions from England, while they ruin their own country by such acts."⁶⁸

⁶⁵ [From George Washington to Major John Jameson, 1 February 1778 \(archives.gov\)](https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0356): From George Washington to Major John Jameson, 1 February 1778," *Founders Online*, National Archives, <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0356>. [Original source: *The Papers of George Washington*, Revolutionary War Series, vol. 13, 26 December 1777–28 February 1778, ed. Edward G. Lengel. Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2003, pp. 437–438.]

⁶⁶ *The Disaffected: Britain's Occupation of Philadelphia During the American*, by Aaron Sullivan

⁶⁷ [To George Washington from Brigadier General John Lacey, Jr., 1 ... \(archives.gov\)](https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0361)

⁶⁸ <https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/03-13-02-0361>

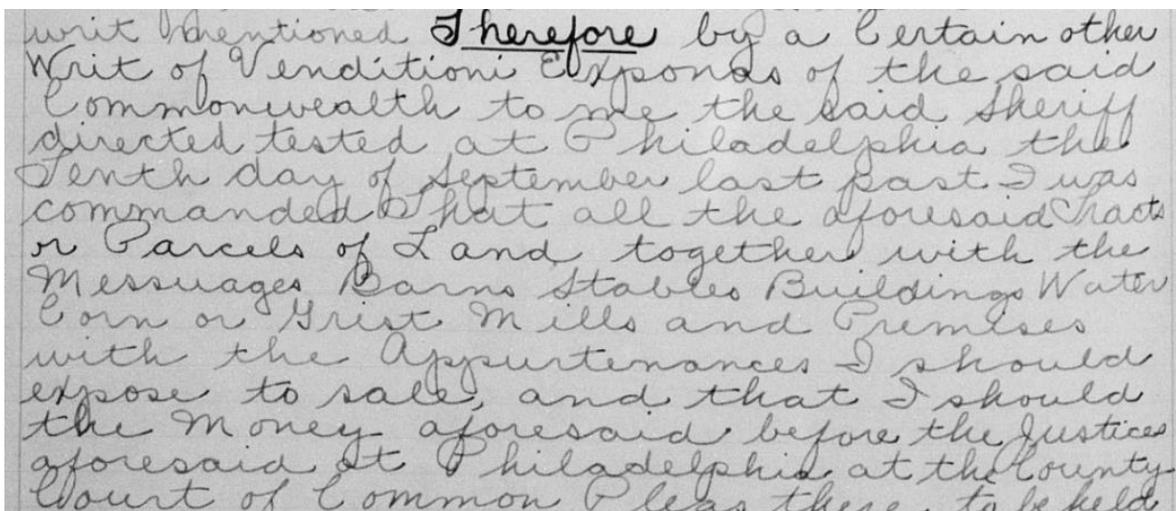
1789 – 1862: The Robeson family return, Milverton & the Loss of Water-Power

1789/1799: Jonathon Robeson & Peter Robeson III, Great-Grandsons of Andrew Robeson Jr., purchase 263 acres from the Vanderen Estate at a Sheriff Sale.

Between 1755 and c. 1760, John Vanderen completed a remarkable set of land purchases that essentially bought back all the 200 acres that were owned by the Robesons and Sander families in 1702 plus an additional 63 acres. In 1785 Mar 9 Pennsylvania Gazette, Vanderen advertised the 90 acres that included all the mills for rent. In the 1787 Feb 14 Pennsylvania Gazette, a bill to proclaim Vanderen as “Non comps mentis” was introduced to halt his ability to sell land or convey personal property. John Vanderen died in 1788 and a “writ of venditions expensas” was direct to the Sheriff, John Ash, to sell the estate to pay debtors.

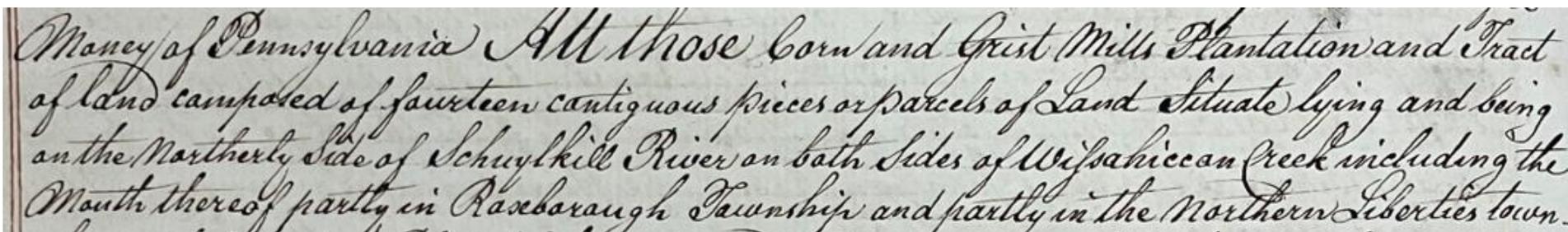
The Sheriff’s sale was held in December 1789 and the deed transferred the land to the Robeson brothers on 6 Mar, 1790, and recorded 24 May, 1800.

Corn and Grist Mills: **The importance of these documents is that they establish that a “Corn” mill existed on the property in 1789 and 1790.**

A snippet of a handwritten document in cursive script. The text reads: "writ mentioned Therefore by a certain other Writ of Venditioni Expensas of the said Commonwealth to me the said Sheriff directed tested at Philadelphia the Tenth day of September last past I was commanded that all the aforesaid Tracts or Parcels of Land together with the Messuages Barns Stables Buildings Water Corn or Grist Mills and Premises with the Appurtenances I should expose to sale, and that I should the Money aforesaid before the Justices aforesaid at Philadelphia at the County Court of Common Pleas there. to be held

Link: [1789 Dec 8 James Ash Sheriff to Peter and Jonathon Robeson.pdf \(philacanoe.org\)](#)

2nd link to Below: [1790 Mar 6 James Ash Esq Sheriiff Vanderen estate Deed to Peter and Jonathon Robeson.pdf \(philacanoe.org\)](#)

A snippet of a handwritten document in cursive script. The text reads: "Mancy of Pennsylvania All those Corn and Grist Mills Plantation and Tract of land composed of fourteen contiguous pieces or parcels of Land Situate lying and being on the Northerly Side of Schuylkill River on both Sides of Wissahickon Creek including the Mouth thereof partly in Roxborough Township and partly in the Northern Liberties town."

1795 from the Duke de la Rochefoucauld as described in his “Travels through the United States of North America.”

Below is a critical section of the Duke’s account of his visit⁶⁹ with Peter Robeson about six years after Peter and his brother, Jonathon, purchased all of John Vanderen’s lands in 1789, almost all of which were previously owned by the Robeson family until the mid-1700s.

“He (*Peter Robeson*) appears to be more skillful as a miller.” (“More’ than a farmer - see the prior page).

His mill, which is said to be the first built in America, is worked by a rivulet called Wissahickon, which turns twenty-five other mills before it reaches Robeson’s.

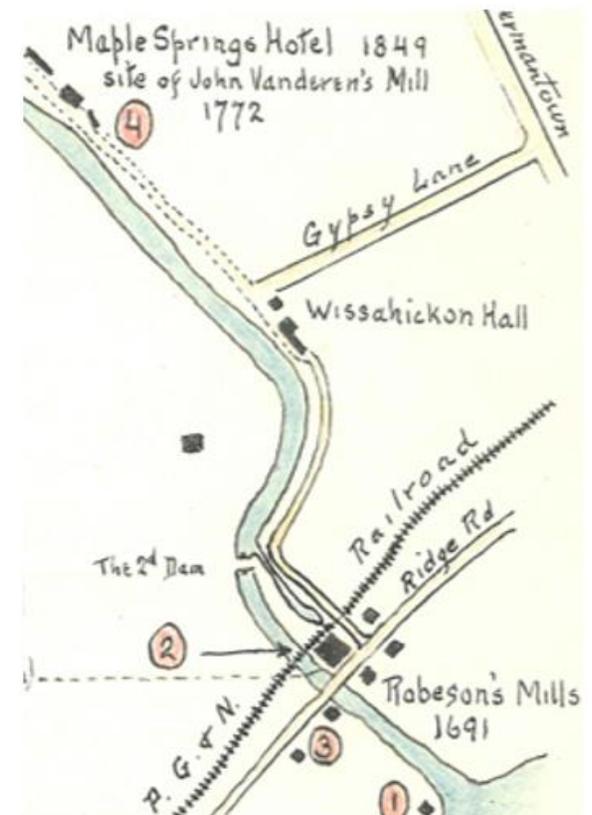
It has three separate water courses, and three separate mills, two of which are for the manufactory (sic70), as they call it, and one for the public.”

The underlining is added as it is important to note that there were three separate courses (races) for water in the Creek to power three separate mills, which are later described as grain mills.

The three mills would have been Robeson’s Rolling Mill (#1 the original Corn Mill c. 1689-1690 or a rebuild of the mill), the much larger grain “Wissahickon Mill” north of Ridge Road (#2 built before 1701) and the mill that John Vanderen and Nicholas Rittenhouse built c. 1772 farther up the Creek #4. (#3 on this map is the Saw Mill built c. 1686-1689 and its water source, the lower dam was also the water source for mill #1.)

The map is from “The Wissahickon Mills” by Douglas Macfarlan, 1949. Gypsy Lane ends at School House Lane. On the route to Germantown. Return to the 1760 Christian Lehman plan map and see on the far right the land and mill owned by Vanderen and Ritten House on a narrow tract of land that went from the Creek up to School House Lane.

Side Note: In 1793, Jonathon Robeson purchased land from a Roxborough neighbor, John Righter, and built a Paper Mill across the River in Merion on Mill Creek. Robeson is referred to as a “blacksmith” in the 1926 article “Old Mills of Mill Creek, Lower Merion” by Charles R. Barker. There are reports of there being a blacksmith shop, across from the saw mill, on Ridge Ave. In addition to the large mill #2 on the map, Robeson may have reestablished or converted the mill on the Creek & Driver (#1) as a Rolling Mill and been known then for pressing iron bars into thinner iron to make wagon wheel hoops to repair wagons in the blacksmith shop⁷¹.



⁶⁹ CTRL+CLCK: [Chadwick Papers Volume 48.pdf \(wsimg.com\)](#) Page 21 (25th page at the link)

⁷⁰ Factory is a synonym of manufactory. In obsolete terms, the difference between manufactory and a factory is that a manufactory is related to manufacturing while a factory is a trading establishment, especially set up by merchants working in a foreign country.

⁷¹ Barker, Charles R., “Old Mills of Mill Creek, Lower Merion” 1926, [The Pennsylvania Magazine of History and Biography](#), Vol. 50, No. 1

1800 Stone Bridge over the Wissahickon, George Willie Beck. <https://www.brooklynmuseum.org/opencollection/objects/2857>

This a 'Romanticism era' picture from the Brooklyn Museum is of the Ridge Road bridge, crossing the Wissahickon just up from where the Creek flows into the Schuylkill River. Given the elevated perspective, it seems there is an excellent chance that it was painted from the second floor of Robeson's Rolling Mill looking upstream. Regardless of this speculation, it is a beautiful picture. The Upper Dam is visible & the Lower Dam is not yet raised.



Note name of Ferry "**Jones Ferry**" and Robeson's mill North of Ridge Road



1810 Map #106 – John Hills Record & Historical Map or Plan of the City of Philadelphia and Environs. The map is aligned with due North on top. At this time the Ferry had been renamed “**Jones Ferry**” as now owned by Horatio G. Jones. (Robeson misspelled “Robinson”.)

http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/mg/di/m011/PDFs/m011Map0106_1.pdf



1816 "Metropolitan Paradise" Captain Watson's "Travels in America: The Sketchbooks and Diary of Joshua Rowley Watson", 1772-1818. The Mouth of the Wissahickon and the Mill (page 128). CTRL-CLCK Borrow for one hour, see pg 128: [Captain Watson's travels in America : the sketchbooks and diary of Joshua Rowley Watson, 1772-1818 : Foster, Kathleen A : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive](#)



The Robeson Mills looking from the west bank of the Schuylkill River. Watercolor by Captain Joshua Watson, 1816. Source: The Barra Foundation, Inc.

See this picture also, as based on location of the small building close to the river it appears it may have been drawn from just south of the mouth of the Wissahickon looking west: CTRL-CLCK [View above the Falls of Schuylkill, plate three of the first number of Picturesque Views of American Scenery | The Art Institute of Chicago \(artic.edu\)](#)

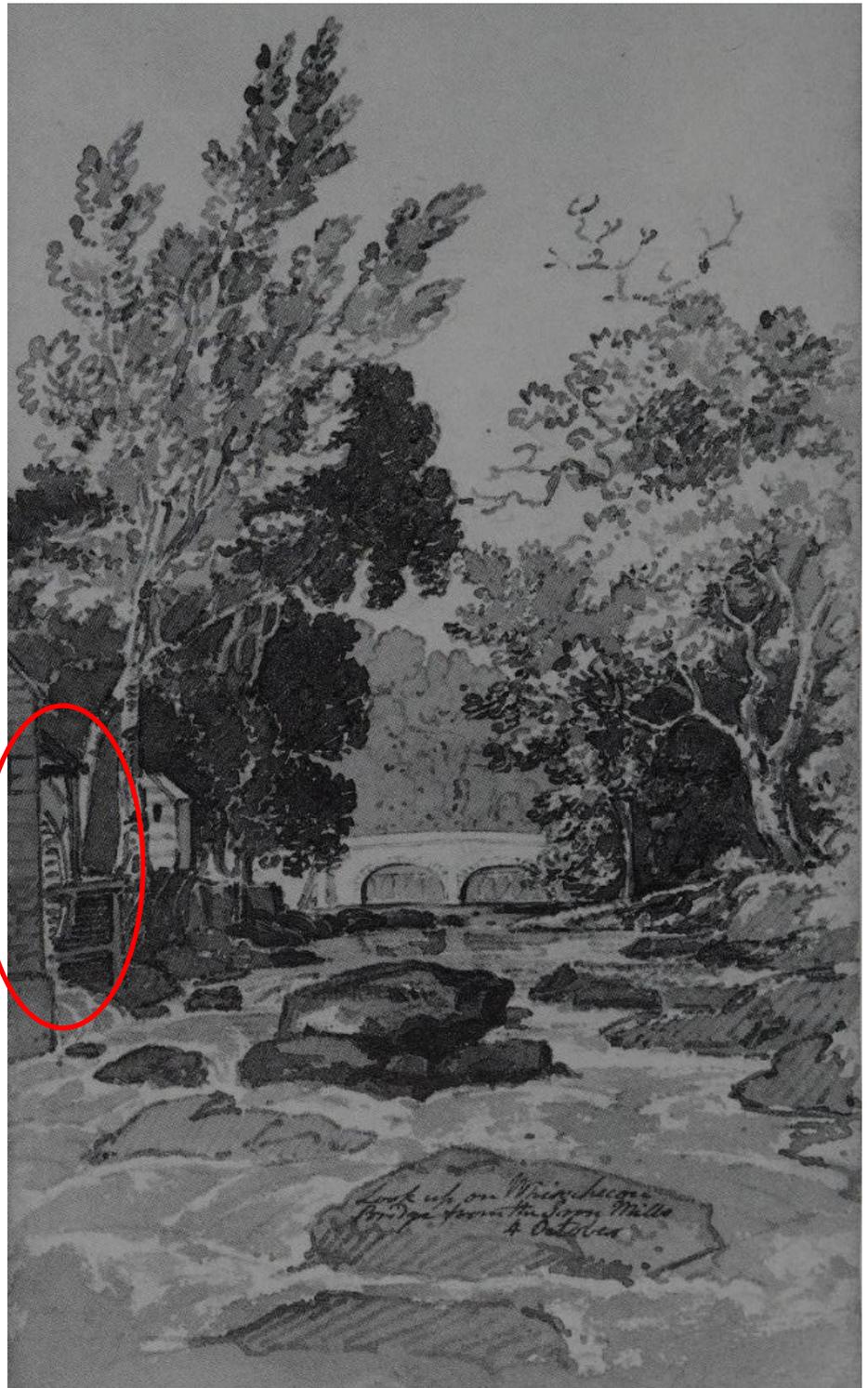
1816 Captain Watson's "Travels in America: The Sketchbooks and Diary of Joshua Rowley Watson", continued⁷². Plate 32. Pen and black wash over graphite (B-93A)

The writing on the rock reads: "Look up on the Whissihicon Bridge from the Iron Mills 4 October"

The NE corner of the Robeson Rolling Mill and a bit of the waterwheel's paddles can be seen on the right with water flowing out the tail race.

While the wheel was ten feet wide based on drawings of the wheel from 1822, the artist may have paddled up the Creek to see it clearly, and then paddled back and painted the wheel in the drawing.

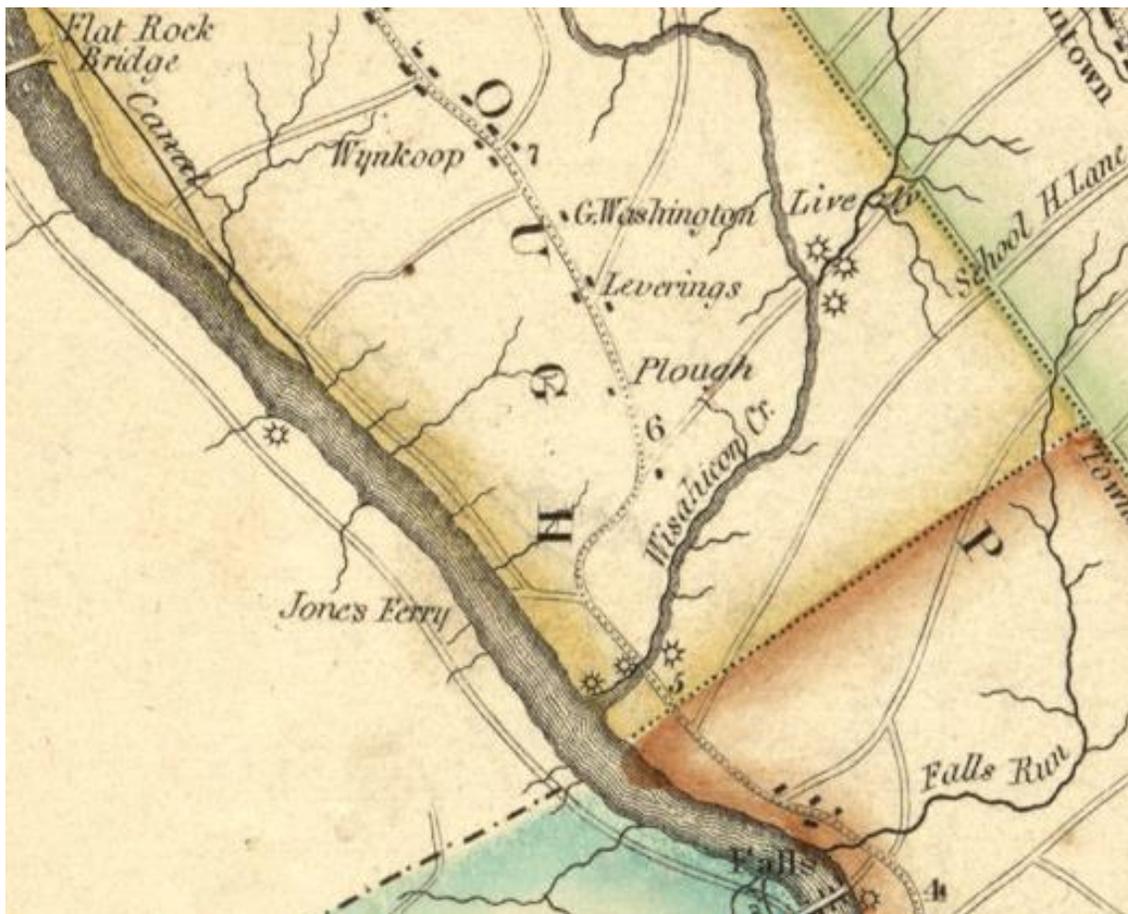
Farther up on the left is the Saw Mill – see next page. The bridge crossing on Ridge Road in the background (as on previous page).



⁷² Page 131: [Captain Watson's travels in America : the sketchbooks and diary of Joshua Rowley Watson, 1772-1818 : Foster, Kathleen A : Free Download, Borrow, and Streaming : Internet Archive](#) (32) See the lithograph: "Railroad Depot at Philadelphia" printed by Kennedy & Lucas, 1832. Copies at the Historical Society of Pennsylvania and the Library Company of Philadelphia, reproduced in Wainwright, Philadelphia in the Romantic Age of Lithography, no. 305. The Second Annual Report of the Commissioners of Fairmount Park (Philadelphia: King and Baird, Printers, 1870) contains a detailed "Map of the survey of Wissahickon Creek from its mouth to Paul's Mill Road."

1816 Map of Philadelphia County: John Melish. The oldest map found to date with both of the two mills on the North-West side of the confluence of the Schuylkill & Wissahickon. Question: Other than the 1777 map, could it be that the mill at the confluence of the Creek & River was as not earlier maps owing to the fact that it was a smaller mill, and not visible from Ridge Road.

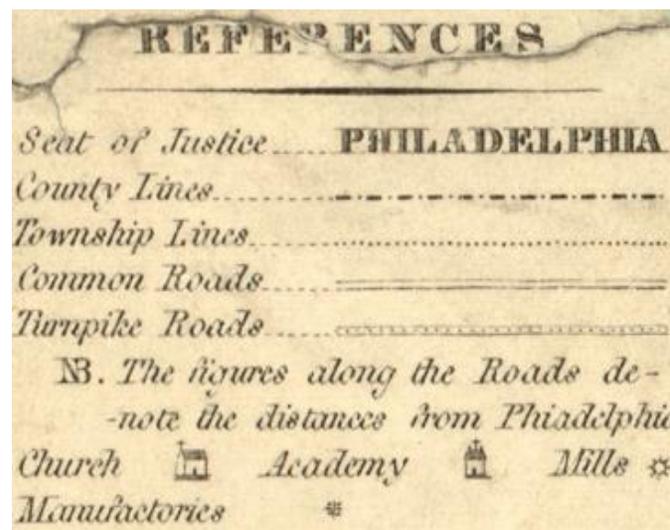
Click or CTRL-CLCK: <https://westphillyhistory.archives.upenn.edu/maps/1816-map-melish> or here: <https://www.loc.gov/item/79695293/>



Mill:



The # 5 on the Philadelphia Township Line means five miles to center of Philadelphia



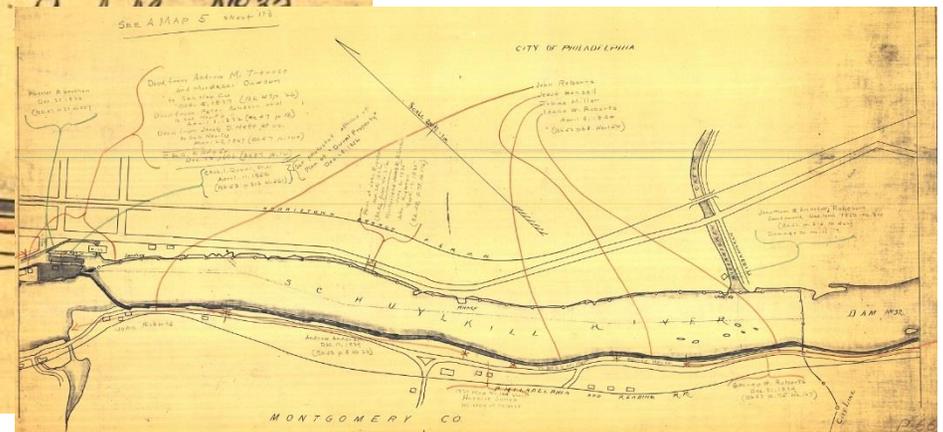
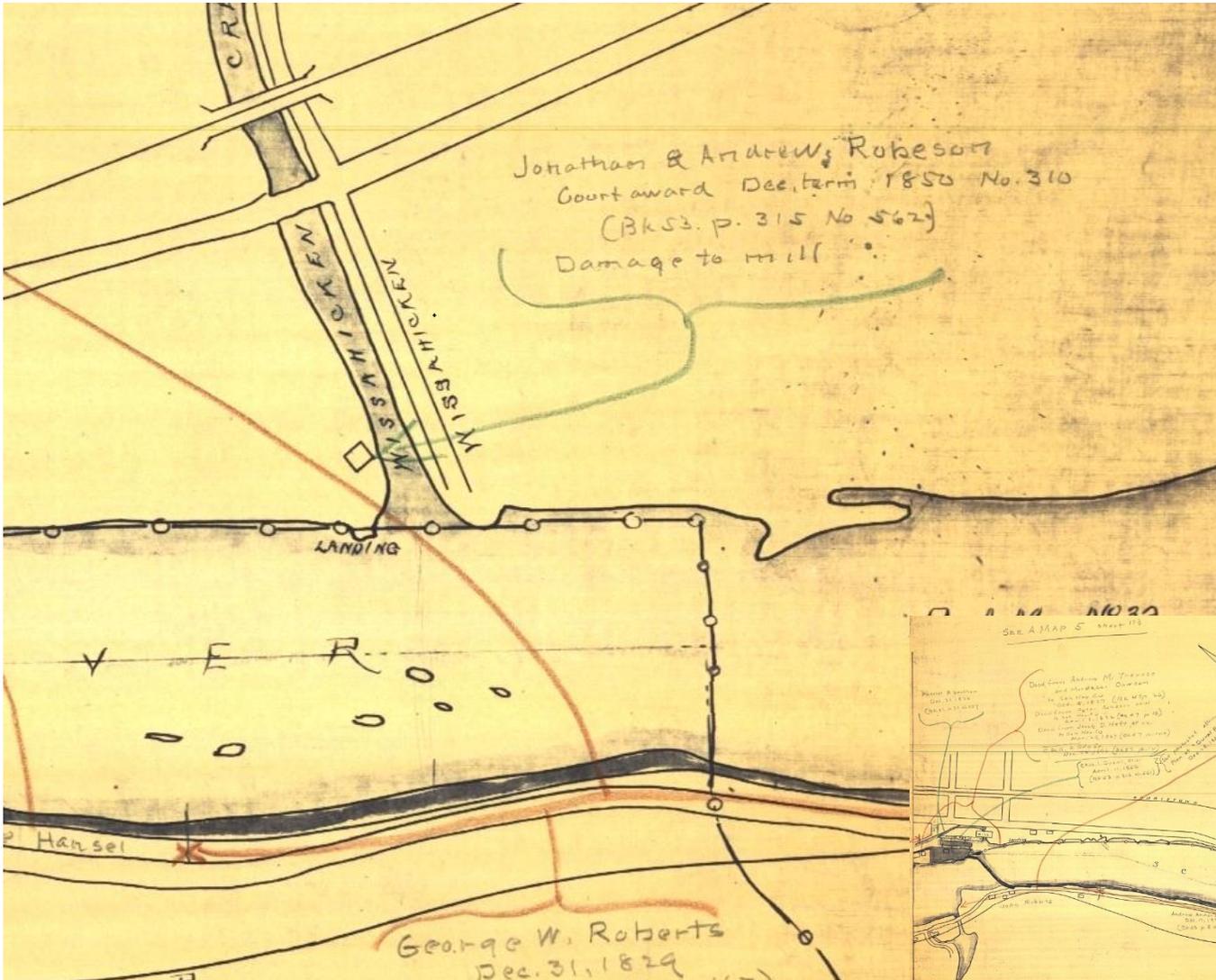
It appears that the mill on the South-East side of the Wissahickon and North of Ridge Road (above mile-mark #5) would have become the largest Robeson's

Mill; see 1830 and 1843 maps. The mill and other land were sold to John Vanderen over the years 1755-1771 "John Van Daren's [sic] house stood along the lower Ridge Road a short distance below Wissahickon Creek. His most referenced 'Grist Mill' stood on the south/east side of the creek about where the railroad crosses it. His mill dam was at the sharp bend in the creek just above the lower Ridge Road." Source: "A Historical Sketch of Roxborough, Manayunk, Wissahickon" by Joseph Starne Miles, 1940.

<https://ia902303.us.archive.org/11/items/historicalskech00mile/historicalskech00mile.pdf> Page 34 (.pdf page 52).

1816 – 1825 Schuylkill Navigation System Collection

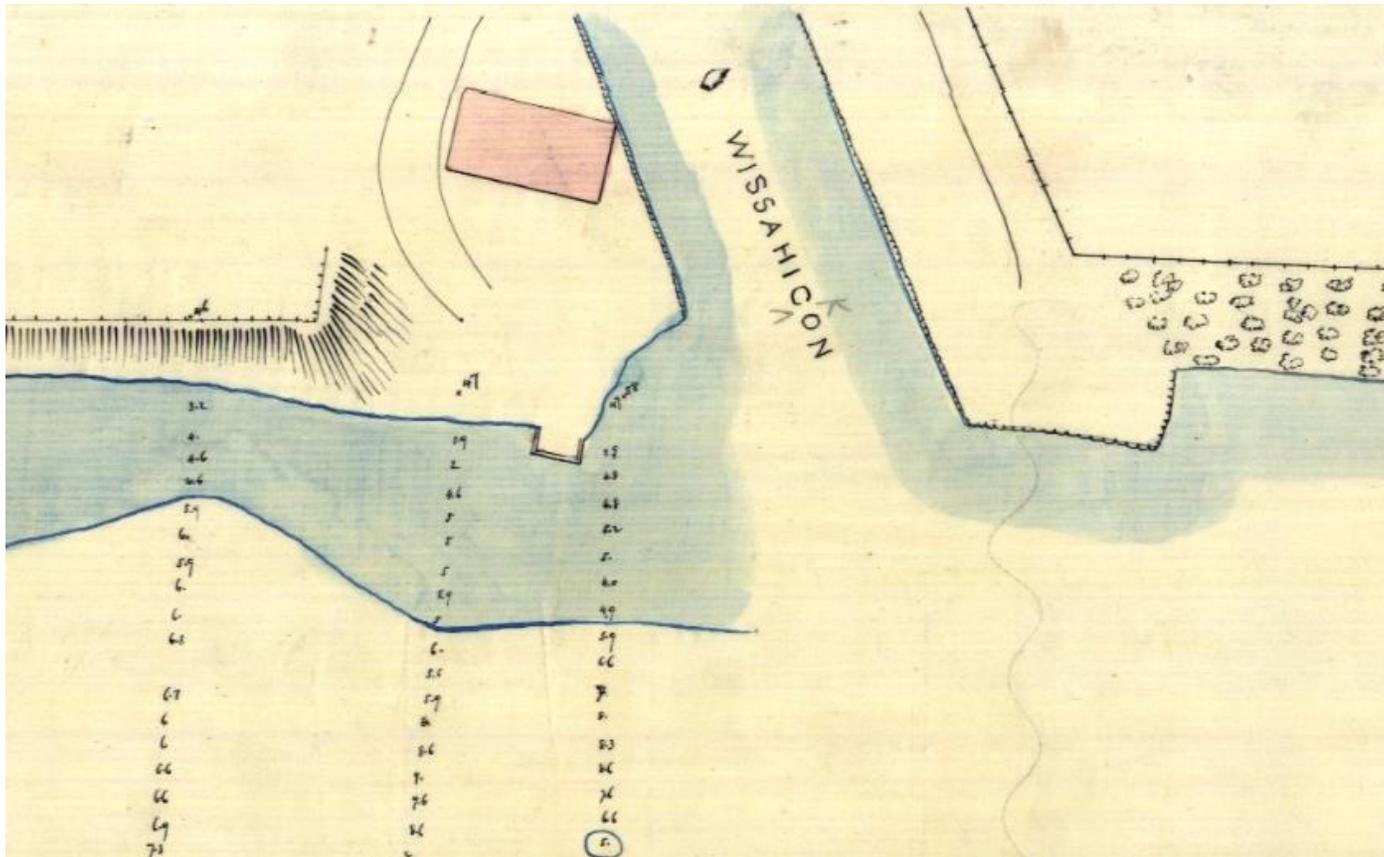
Reach 1 <https://drive.google.com/file/d/109w1-B963c1KdVD6Xr4S3zrZWIFweKYb/view> No date on the map in original writing; there is a stamp with a date of 1888, but seems likely that original map was completed earlier. Regardless, the referenced material in a later note will be researched and supplies evidence of a mill on the site. Dating this map is problematic. The Schuylkill Navigation System and mapping were started in 1816 and locks were completed by 1825, but mapping updates continued to the late 1800's says: "**Jonathon & Andrew Robeson, Court award Dec. term 1850 No. 310 (Bk 53 p. 315 No 562) Damage to Mill.**" No notes or dates are on the other original map.



1816 – 1819: Schuylkill Navigation System Collection Item **Reach 1-1** "Fairmount Pool". CTRL+CLCK:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1PS8gXP_7M7U1LZZHXQBxaxERbVBEade. Double-Click 1-1 and enlarge by moving cursor down to bottom in middle of screen (- and + appear) and see section right of mid-point. Do same on image 1-3 and move to far left on map to see "Pencoyd Iron Works" and across on N side landing where Robeson Ferry, then later the Righter Ferry docked, now RR Bridge.

Note rock off the corner of the building that is still there today and is referenced in a deed as the point in the middle of the Creek. Note also the road to a landing dock.



In 1824, Peter Robeson was listed as a 'Manager' of the "Ridge Turnpike Company." Peter was a great-grandson of Andrew Robeson, Jr.; Andrew Jr. likely built the 1st toll bridge over the Wissahickon in the early 1700s.⁷³

Clipping from the "Edwin C. Jellett Collection of Scrapbooks" says "A picture⁷⁴ was shown of the mouth of Wissahickon Creek and Robeson's grist mill. The canal boats used to come alongside, and unload grain and take on flour."

⁷³ See page 306 CTRL+CLCK: <https://hsmcpa.org/images/thebulletin/1953vol8no4.pdf>

⁷⁴ The collection will be searched to add the referenced picture.

1817 Note is in regards water height for "Peter Robeson's Rolling Mill

"A statement of the height of the water on the Sheeting at **Peter Robeson's Rolling Mill** near the Schuylkill occasioned by the obstructions which have been put across the River at the Falls."

A Statement of the height of the Water on the Sheeting at Peter Robeson's Rolling Mill, near Schuylkill, occasioned by the obstructions which have been put across the River at the Falls.

1817	Days of Month	Sheeting	Height in Inches Morning	Evening	1818	Days of Month	Sheeting	Height in Inches Morning	Evening	1818	Days of Month	Sheeting	Height in Inches Morning	Evening						
12/19	19	Above	18	—	1/10	13	Above	12	5 3/4	2/10	7	Above	2	1/2	3/10	4	above	47	44	
	20	—	18	—		14	—	5	10		8	Level	4	above		5	—	37	25	
	21	—	18	—		15	—	1/2	6		9	Below	9	—		6	—	21	14	
	22	—	12	16		16	—	5	8 1/2		10	—	13	6		7	—	15	13	
	23	—	11	15		17	—	7 3/4	10 1/2		11	—	4	Level		8	—	10	—	
	24	—	21	22		18	—	9	—		12	—	4	2		9	—	9	7	
	25	—	23	23		19	—	8 3/4	7 1/2		13	—	4	3		10	—	11	—	
	26	—	45	49		20	—	10	8		14	—	4	3		11	—	25	19	
	27	—	20	18		21	—	5	5		15	Level	2 1/2	above		12	—	19	21	
	28	—	15	14		22	—	6	4		16	—	4	2 1/2	above		13	—	21	23
	29	—	13	13		23	Below	2	6 above		17	—	4	—		14	—	24	—	
	30	—	13	16		24	Level	Level	4 below		18	Level	3	Below		15	—			

Document photographed in the Philadelphia City Archives. [1817 Water Heights Robeson's Rolling Mill.JPG \(4032x3024\)](http://philacanoe.org) (philacanoe.org)

1820 Rolling & Slitting Mill and Nail Factory⁷⁵ - United States Census Manufacturing Schedules

“The Roxborough works consisting of a Rolling & Slitting Mill & Nail Factory Roxborough Township, Philadelphia County, Pa.”

John Moore is given as employer as he rented the mills from his father-in-law, Peter Robeson, in 1820 (per page 2) and later owned them one-third part (per P. Robeson letter and 1834 deed) upon the death of his father-in-law, Peter Robeson. In 1804, Dr. John Moore married Catherine Robeson, b. 1781 d. 1860, who was the daughter of Peter Robeson and Martha Livezey. Peter Robeson was the great-grandson of Andrew Robeson Jr. (Andrew Robeson Jr. was the nephew of Andrew Robeson Sr. (purchased the land in 1691), not his son, and Andrew Jr. came to own the land in 1703 after Andrew Sr. died). Martha Livezey was the granddaughter of Thomas Livezey, Miller, whose home, “Glen Fern,” is the last surviving millers house in the Wissahickon.

Question No. 1. Raw Materials Employed: In **Rolling & Slitting Mill Bar Iron. Nail Factory Hoop Iron.**

2. Annually consumed: Bar Iron 135 Tons, Hoop Iron 82 Tons.

3. Annual Cost: Bar Iron \$13,884, Hoop Iron \$10,660

4. # Men: In R&S Mill Four Men. Nail Factory Three men consistently & occasionally three others heading nails. 5. & 6. None (No Women or Boys/Girls)

7. Machinery: In R&S Mill, one sett (sic) of Rolling & 6 setts cutters with necessary appendages. In Nail Factory, two patent Machines for cutting & heading nails at the same operation & one side Machine for cutting Brads & points, also, Four tools for heading nails by hand.

8. Quantity of Machinery in Operation: In R&S Mill, all. In Nail Factory, all.

9. Expenditures: Amount capital invested: In R&S Mill \$3,000, In Nail Factory \$3,000.

10. Annual Wages: R&S Mill, \$867, Nail Factory, \$1,497.

11. Annual Contingent Expenses: R&S Mill, \$1,229, Nail Factory, \$1,820.

12. Articles Manufactured: R&S Mill, Hoop & Rod Iron. Nail Factory, Nails & Brads.

13. Annual market Value: Hoop & Rod Iron, average price \$ 125 ^{88/100} per ton. Nails & Brads 8 ³/₄ lots per lb.

14. General Remarks concerning the Establishment, as to its actual and past condition, the demand for, and sale of, its Manufactures.

The above works are the property of Peter Robeson, rented by John Moore & by him carried on, through his agent. The works are in good repair. The demand for & sales of Hoop & Rod Iron has been dull for the last year occasioned by the importation of large quantities of foreign Iron of those descriptions, more particularly small hoops. The R&S Mills is capable of Manufacturing 300 tons of Hoop & Rod Iron annually if the demand thereof was adequate thereto, The demand for & sail of Nails has been for the last year.

In No. 8, it is stated that all the Machinery in the Nail Mill are in operation, which must be understood with some exceptions, on respect to the Tools for heading nails by hand, there being four of them one which is occupied occasionally by the man who works the side machines the other three, by three of the hands who work in the R&S Mill only when they have nothing to do therein. Also, respecting Cutters in the R&S Mill R&S Mill there being Sett of different sizes, but one sett only are in operation at a time. There is also one Blacksmith constantly employed in keeping the Machinery in repair, whose wages are \$416 per annum, which sum is inclusive in the amount of contingent expenses No. 11 together with the cost of coal & wood consumed, hauling to & from Market. Agents Salary being apportioned between R&S Mill and Nail Factory.

The foregoing Statements I believe to be nearly correct for the last year ending the 1st Instant.

8th Mo. 16, 1820 James Davis, Agent, for John Moore.

For the entry for Peter Robeson’s flour mill 200 yards upstream see CTRL-CLCK: [Records of the 1820 census of manufactures \(familysearch.org\)](https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSK3-3?i=100&cc=1)

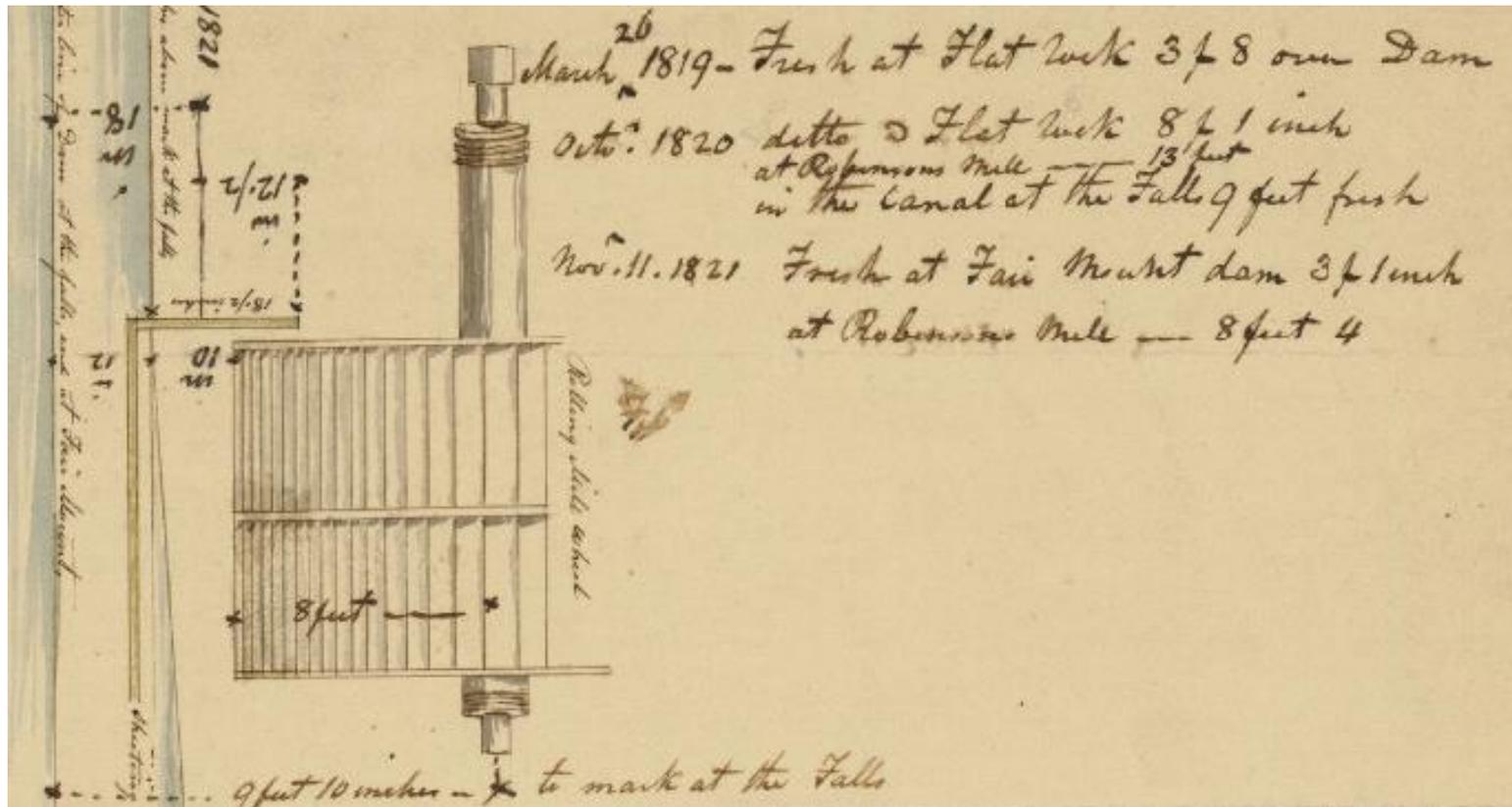
⁷⁵ See here for the form and extended versions of the 14 questions - CTRL-CLCK: [Records of the 1820 census of manufactures \(familysearch.org\)](https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSK3-3?i=100&cc=1)

1822 Graff Collection - The Franklin Institute courtesy of the Philadelphia Water Dept. Archives

See footnote for link to full drawing⁷⁶.

Title: "Peter Robinson's mills above the Falls examined by the Watering Committee as leveled by Graff⁷⁷ same day Sep. 25, 1821."
"Description Peter Robinson's mills above the Falls examined by the Watering Committee as leveled by Graff same day Sep. 25, 1821 in order to ascertain how much the raising of the dam 18 inches at Fair Mount would injure them" ("Them" being the Robesons.)

The wheel is shown to have a 16 foot diameter and was 10 to 11 feet wide (see 1822 Saw Mill, Nail Factory, and Rolling Mill Measurements).



⁷⁶ Best quality: -- [Philadelphia Architects and Buildings \(philadelphiabuildings.org\)](http://philadelphiabuildings.org) or CTRL+CLCK: [Peter Robinson's mills above the Falls examined by the \[Watering?\] Committee as leveled by Graff same day Sep. 25, 1821 - 1821 | Philadelphia Water Department \(pastperfectonline.com\)](http://pastperfectonline.com)

⁷⁷ [Graff, Frederic, Jr. \(1817 - 1890\) -- Philadelphia Architects and Buildings \(philadelphiabuildings.org\)](http://philadelphiabuildings.org)

1822 Measurements Robeson's two Mill 1.) the "Rolling Mill and 2.) "Merchant and Grist Mills" (three wheels)

A transcription of measurements taken as part of Robeson suit vs. the Schuylkill Navigation Company for the loss of water power when the Navigation Company built the lower dam c. 1816 and reduced the amount of water the Rolling Mill received. Endnote includes other mill with three wheels.^{xiv}

The Robesons won the 1st suit and sued again later for additional compensation when the dam was raised a second time c. 1821.

I do Certify that on the 9th day of Dec^r 1822 I took the levels of the Wispahickon Creek at Peter Robinsons Mills and found the same to be as follows

<i>From the top of the overfall at the upper dam to the top of the Overfall at the lower dam</i>	<i>feet inches</i>
	<i>4 " 11</i>
<i>from thence to a point near the outer end of the sheeting under the Rolling mill wheel</i>	<i>16 " 5 1/2</i>
	<i>total</i>
	<i>21 " 4 1/2</i>

At which point the water of the Schuylkill is at this time 14 inches deep, the Rolling Mill being at a ...

Of great interest here, below is another recap of water flow measurements made in 1822 wherein the mill is referred to as "...the **Old Rolling Mill.**" (Next to last line below on far right.)

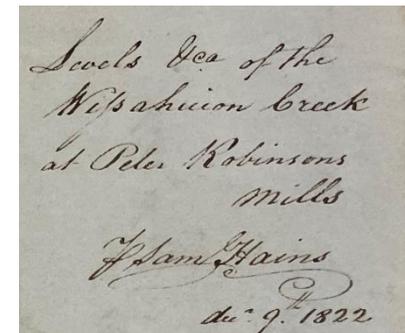
Knowing that there never was a 'new rolling mill', it seems reasonable to posit that the **writer (Samuel Haines) is implying that the rolling mill was built well before the turn of the century.**

<i>The following data was furnished at that time by Samuel Haines as taken by him on</i>		
<i>A.D. 1822.</i>		
<i>Diameter of water wheel in Robeson's Flour mill on the Wispahickon Creek, fifteen feet nine inches</i>		<i>15. 9</i>
<i>Depth of water in the forebay, three feet, two inches</i>		<i>3. 2</i>
<i>The sum of the diameter of the wheel, and depth of the water in the forebay, eighteen feet, eleven inches</i>		<i>18. 11</i>
<i>Overfall of Robeson's upper dam, above the outer end of sheeting under the Old Rolling Mill wheel twenty one</i>		
<i>feet and four tenths of a foot =</i>		<i>21. 4. 8/10</i>

1822 Saw Mill, Nail Factory, and Rolling Mill Measurements⁷⁸

The document introduced on the prior page has evidence that a **Nail Factory** existed on the same race that the Saw Mill and Rolling Mill used to draw their power⁷⁹. The document comes from the Philadelphia City Archives Fairmount Park purchases, Dobson Files: "Levels &, etc... Claims of the Peter Robeson on the Corporation" being the Schuylkill River Navigation Corporation for raising the dam.

Water power was measured in "inches of water" the mill produced and it is interesting to note that the Saw Mill had **121** inches of water, the Nail Factory **63** inches of water and the Rolling Mill an impressive **596.5** inches of water – details in this Endnote^{xv}. Also, a 'nail factory' is referred to in some documents as a "**slitting mill** to make strips that could be fashioned into nails or other products."⁸⁰



In addition to the facts stated in the Within Certificate I have this day ascertained —

That the depth of Head at the Sawmill is	4" 11
length of gap —	3" 8
width of do —	0" 2 3/4
= 121. inches of water	
from bottom of gap to bottom of the wheel	10" 5
diameter of the wheel	14. feet

That the depth of head at the Nail factory is — 4" 10

length of gap —	3" 6
width of do —	0" 1 1/2
= 63. inches of water	

And that the depth of head at the Rolling Mill is 7" 3/2

with two gaps each in length	4" 7 1/2
width of westernmost gap is —	0" 5 1/2
- do - of easternmost do - is —	0. 5 1/4
= 596 1/2 inches of water	
from bottom of gap to shooting under the wheel	9" 2
diameter of the wheel	18" 0
breadth of wheel on the face	11" 0

⁷⁸ [1822 Measurements Robeson.pdf \(philacanoe.org\)](#)

⁷⁹ See also reference in the Chadwick Papers to its being the first nail factory in the United States, albeit unsourced; pg 8: [Chadwick Papers Volume 16.pdf \(wsimg.com\)](#)

⁸⁰ See here and search on word "nail" [ExplorePAHistory.com - Stories from PA History Furnace and Forge of America](#)

1827 First Reach of the Schuylkill Navigation Maps Images 1-112 and 1-1

<https://www.racc.edu/sites/default/files/imported/Yocum/canal/Reaches/Maps/Reach1/1-112.gif>

Note that the extension of the original building on the Northside. This extension does not appear on the 1848 or 1863 maps and may simply have been a shed-like roof over the waterwheel and wheel pit (tail race to the Creek).



1830 – 1860 Maps, Drawings and Paintings

1830: PHILADELPHIA & ENVIRONS "The Strangers' Guide to the Public Buildings, Places of Amusement, Streets.... of the City of Philadelphia" <http://www.mapsofpa.com/19thcentury/1830-8587.jpg>.

Two Mills on the 1816 map the on West side of the Wissahickon are missing/not recorded here. The only Mill is the large the one on other side of Ridge Road and was Robeson's Mill originally, and later (1760) Vandereen's Mill. This is last map found to date pre-dating the railroad. Of other interest, see Robin Hood Inn bottom right.



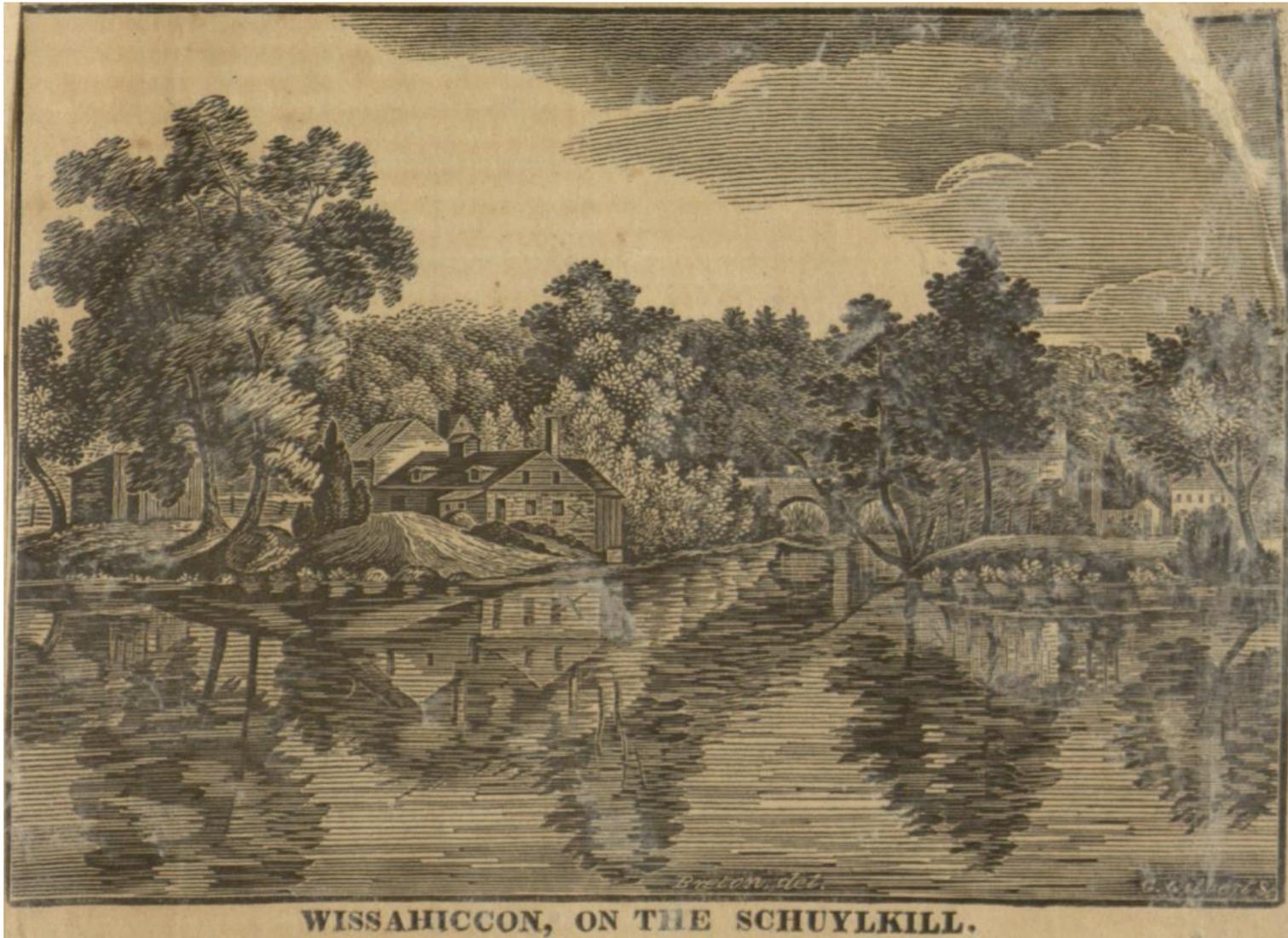
Common Legend for a Mill:



1830 By William Loder Browne, aka Breton, 1771–1855, and woodcut later by George Gilbert, born ca. 1834 lithographer. Woodcut:

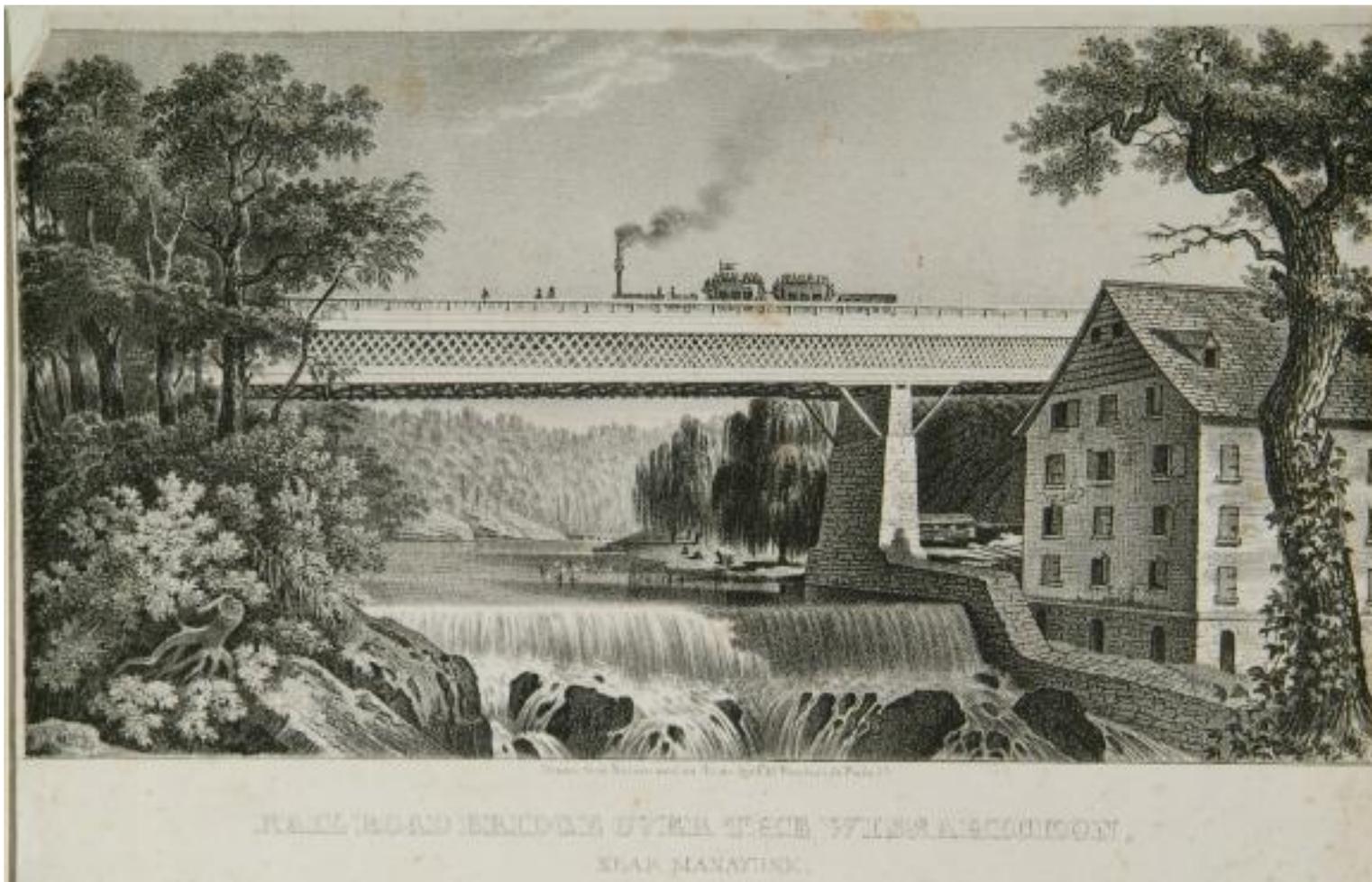
<https://digital.library.villanova.edu/Item/vudl:99189#?c=&m=&s=&cv=&xywh=-1772%2C-116%2C6353%2C2312>

W L Breton – basis of est. date drawn: [Wm L. Breton, Nineteenth-Century Philadelphia Artist](#)



1834 Railroad Bridge over the Wissahickon, Near Manayunk, circa 1834 (HSP Bb 7 R131) [Fondly, Pennsylvania: Notes from Archives and Conservation – A project of the Historical Society of Pennsylvania \(wordpress.com\)](#)

The mill on the right is the “Robeson Mill” just north of Ridge Road (neither the road nor its bridge are shown). The wooden bridge was first erected c. 1833. In that year the owner was Peter Robeson, b. 1748, d. 1833⁸¹.

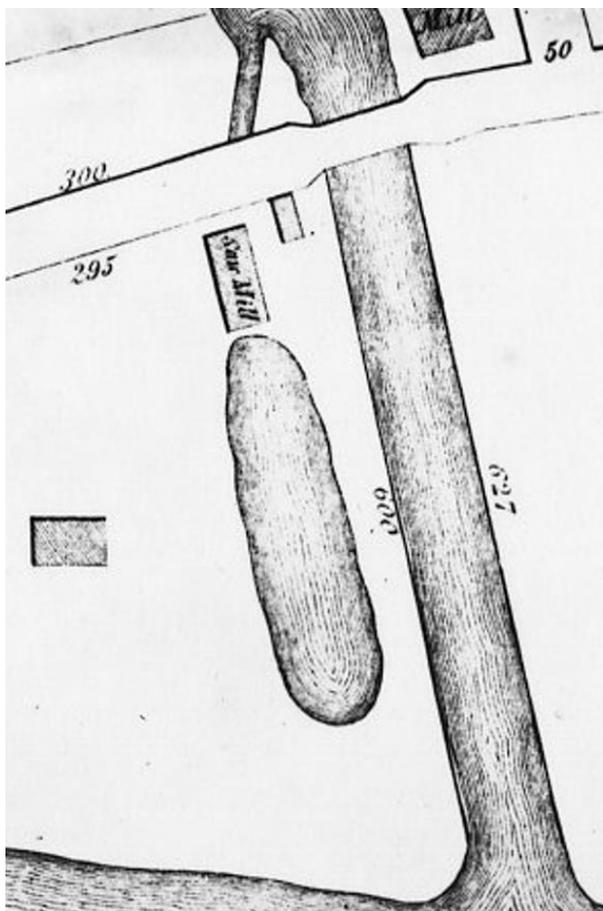


⁸¹ See another reproduction also [Railroad bridge over the Wissahickon, near Manayunk. \[graphic\] / Drawn from nature and on stone by Chs. Fenderich Philada. | Library Company of Philadelphia Digital Collections](#)

1835 – 1838 Black and white photograph of the **Robeson Estate** (Manayunk) at the mouth of the Wissahickon From glass negative belonging to Clarence Johnson From the plan: "Plan of the Robeson Estate, near Robeson Estate Plan, Manayunk."⁸²

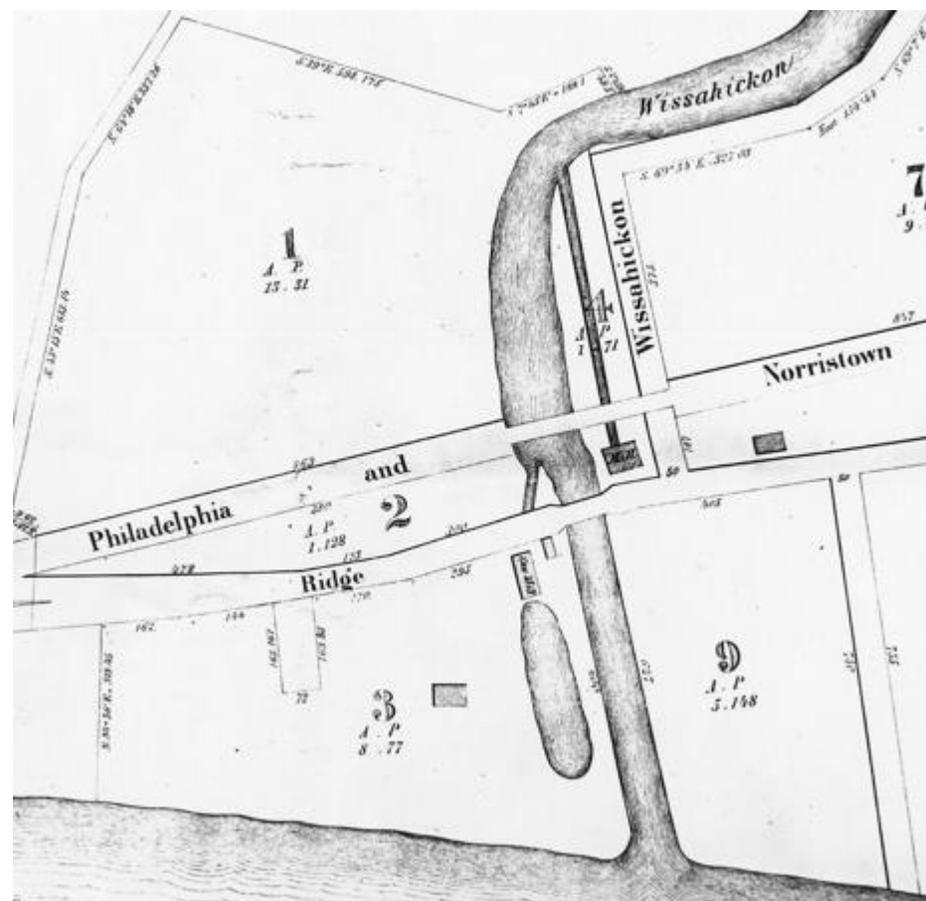
The date range starts with when the Philadelphia, Germantown, and Norristown Railroad Company line branch from 16th Street Jct. to Norristown was complete in August 1835.⁸³ The Robeson family owned the land from 1789 until 1864, but the main Mill North of Ridge Avenue burned down in August of 1862.

In 1848 Jonathon Robeson brought suit vs. the Schuylkill Navigation Company for its having raised the dam a second time and cut-down water flow to the Mill race, making it inoperative. See the year 1848 for more details.



The key elements of this map are that it shows the mill race flowing under Ridge Road, and the water first used by a "Saw Mill" on the South side of Ridge. It shows the saw mill's "tail race" going into the Mill Pond that provided the Robeson Rolling Mill a consistent flow of water power (before the Navigation Company raised the dam).

Ironically, the map maker could see the pond but not the mill farther down. The next page shows the mill on a map from 1816, one of several done by the Schuylkill Navigation Company.



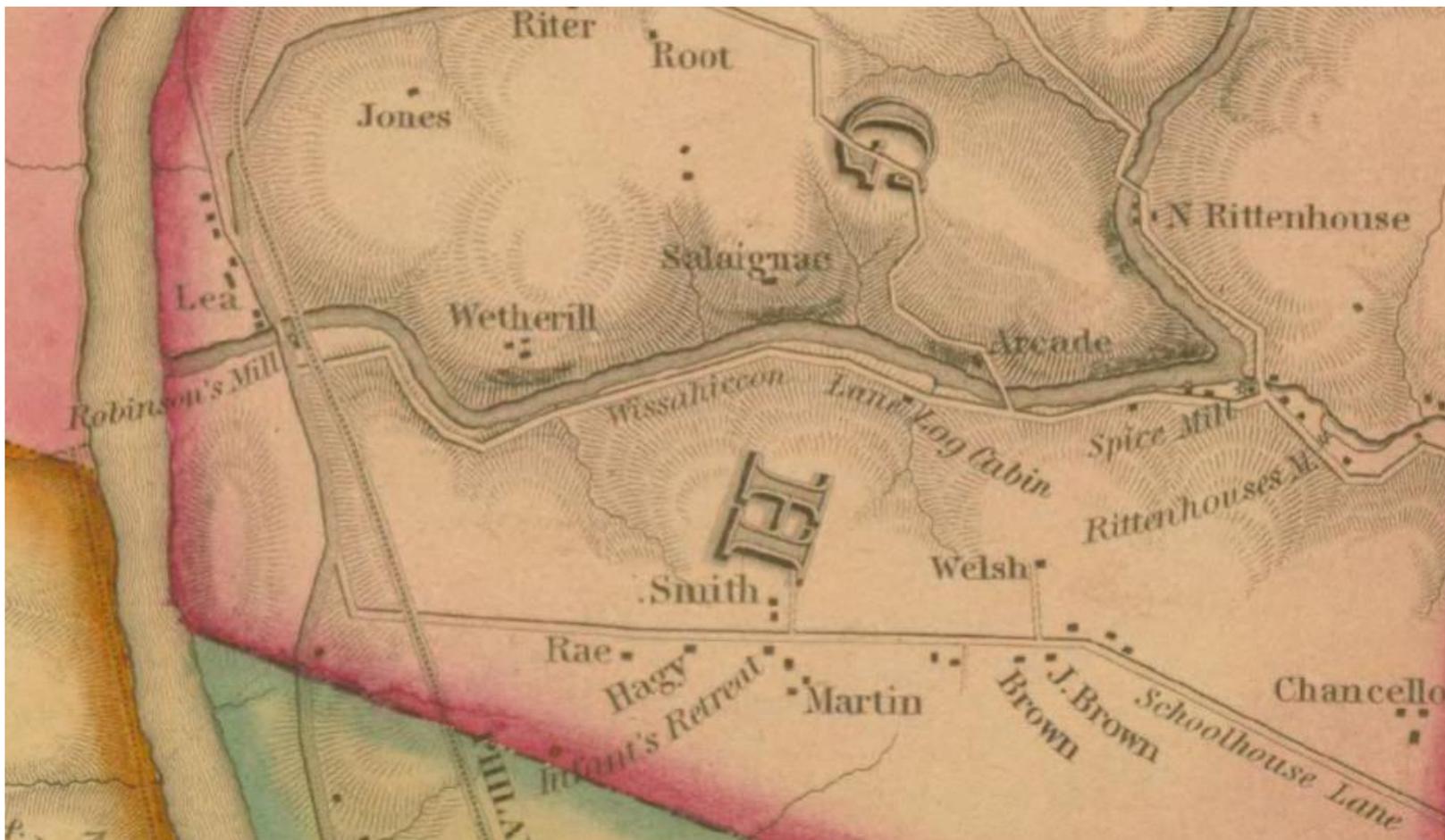
⁸² CTRL+CLICK: [2010.303.6.1-3 - Print, Photographic \(catalogaccess.com\)](https://www.germantownhistoricalsociety.org/2010.303.6.1-3-Print-Photographic) Germantown Historical Society.

⁸³ [Philadelphia, Germantown, and Norristown Rail Road Company - Social Networks and Archival Context \(snaccooperative.org\)](https://snaccooperative.org/)

1843 A Map of the County of Philadelphia from Actual Survey, 1843, Map: Robeson Mill, pronounced and below as “Robinson’s” with mill between Ridge Road and the Railroad on the Eastern side of the Wissahickon.

View Full Record <https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/zoom/11764> or <https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3824p.la000784a/?r=0.362,0.183,0.083,0.038,0>

Note the reference to “Lea” which seems to denote ownership of the Milverton Estate by Mary C. Lea or her father who married Wm Minster 1 Sep 1840.



“Shoomac Park” - The Robeson House⁸⁴ does not appear to be on the 1843 map; the house was torn down in 1961. The house was on the South side of “Wissahickon Turnpike” [Lincoln Drive] and not on the creek itself. Historical American Building Survey 1933. The map is oriented a bit



differently than most – see compass above.

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/hhh.pa0884.sheet/>

⁸⁴ <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/master/pnp/habshaer/pa/pa0800/pa0884/data/pa0884data.pdf>

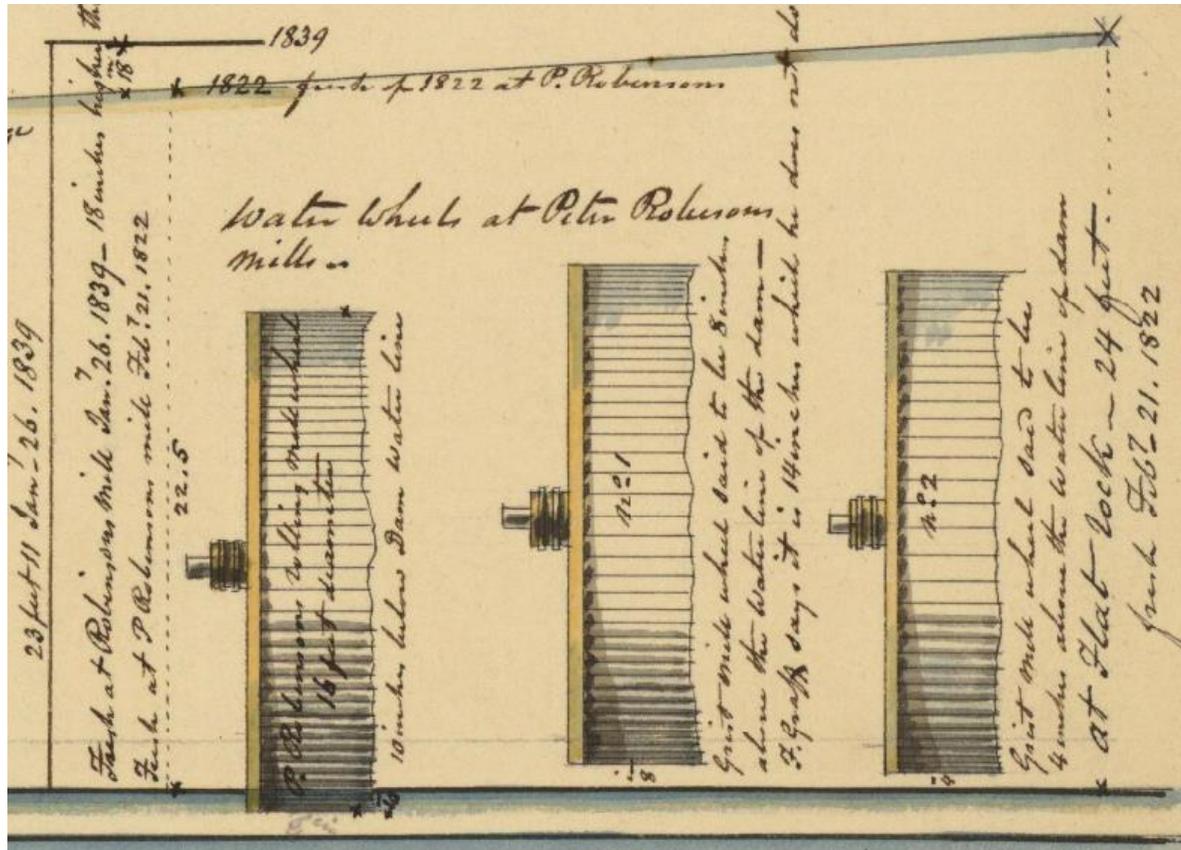
1845 Graff Collection - The Franklin Institute courtesy of the Philadelphia Water Dept. Archives

See footnote for link to **full drawing**⁸⁵. Date estimated based on fact that the dam was in 1843-1844 which prompted 2nd suit by Robesons.

Title: Profiles showing the **heights of freshets** on the Schuylkill River, at Fairmount Dam, Peter Robinson's Mill in East Falls, and Flat Rock Dam.

Desc.: Profiles showing the heights of freshets on the Schuylkill River, at Fairmount Dam, Peter Robinson's Mill[s] in East Falls, and Flat Rock Dam.

"The effects of the different freshets [at Fairmount?] as represented were observed and measured by F. Graff." Waterwheel on left is labeled "Rolling Mill" and two on right are "Grist Mill" No. 1 and No. 2.



⁸⁵ High-quality view with zoom: -- [Philadelphia Architects and Buildings \(philadelphiabuildings.org\)](https://philadelphiabuildings.org) Originally found here CTRL+CLCK: [Profiles showing the heights of freshets on the Schuylkill River , at Fairmount Dam, Peter Robinson's Mill in East Falls, and Flat Rock Dam. - 1845 ca. | Philadelphia Water Department \(pastperfectonline.com\)](https://pastperfectonline.com) Graff drawings and interest ones of other waterwheels: -- [holding: Wheels Both Sides -- Philadelphia Architects and Buildings \(philadelphiabuildings.org\)](https://philadelphiabuildings.org) and index [Frederick Graff Collection - Franklin Institute Archives - Philadelphia Architects and Buildings \(philadelphiabuildings.org\)](https://philadelphiabuildings.org)

1845 The last days of sufficient water power for the mill rolling iron

Referenced here Charles V. Hagner⁸⁶: <http://freepages.rootsweb.com/~dynamo53/genealogy/Manayunk/EarlyHistory/EarlyHistManayunk.html>

Excerpt: "My old friend Amos Jones, a most worthy man and a resident of Roxborough, **rented of the Robeson's the rolling mill at the mouth of the Wissahickon.**⁸⁷ On a certain dry time, he had not sufficient water to drive his mill. **It took some time to heat the iron, and only half an hour to run it through the rolls;** and he thought, by horse power, he could pump into his forebay a sufficient additional supply of water to drive his mill the half-hour. He erected the pump, but the Navigation Company, who had litigation and lawsuits with the Robeson's, with which Mr. Jones had nothing to do, forbid him to use the pump, as he had no right to take the water out of the river, although it ran immediately back.

Mr. Jones then said he would move his pump further up the Wissahickon and pump the water there; but this was also forbidden, on the ground that it was one of the tributary streams of the river, and he had no right to divert it."

⁸⁶ Hagner's "father owned the two lower mills on the Falls Creek. "He also says of interest in 1869" "The Wissahickon is small in comparison to what it was, and I am satisfied the Schuylkill River has much diminished in size or quantity of water flowing down it." [Early history of the Falls of Schuylkill, Manayunk, Schuylkill and Lehigh navigation companies, Fairmount waterworks, etc. \(wsimg.com\)](#)

⁸⁷ Circa 1845 based on the reference to the Robeson suits, which came first in c 1822 after the Fairmount dam was completed and then a second suit c. 1845 after the dam was rebuilt and raised in 1843-44. [76001662.pdf \(nps.gov\)](#)

The Annual Report of the Watering Committee (1852) notes the following:

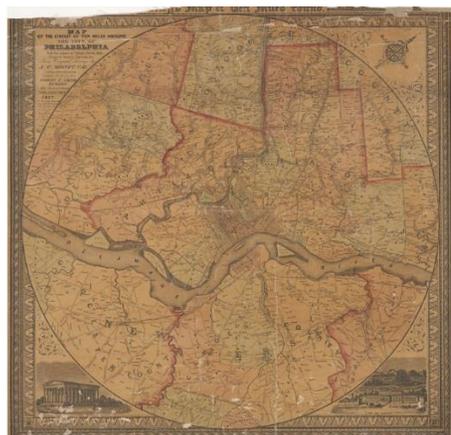
Water flowed over dam for first time 25 July 1821. Dam rebuilt 1842-43. . (p. 30).

1847 Map of the Circuit of Ten Miles Around the City of Philadelphia, 1847, Map <https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/zoom/42118>

Note Robeson spelled Robinson.



Full map

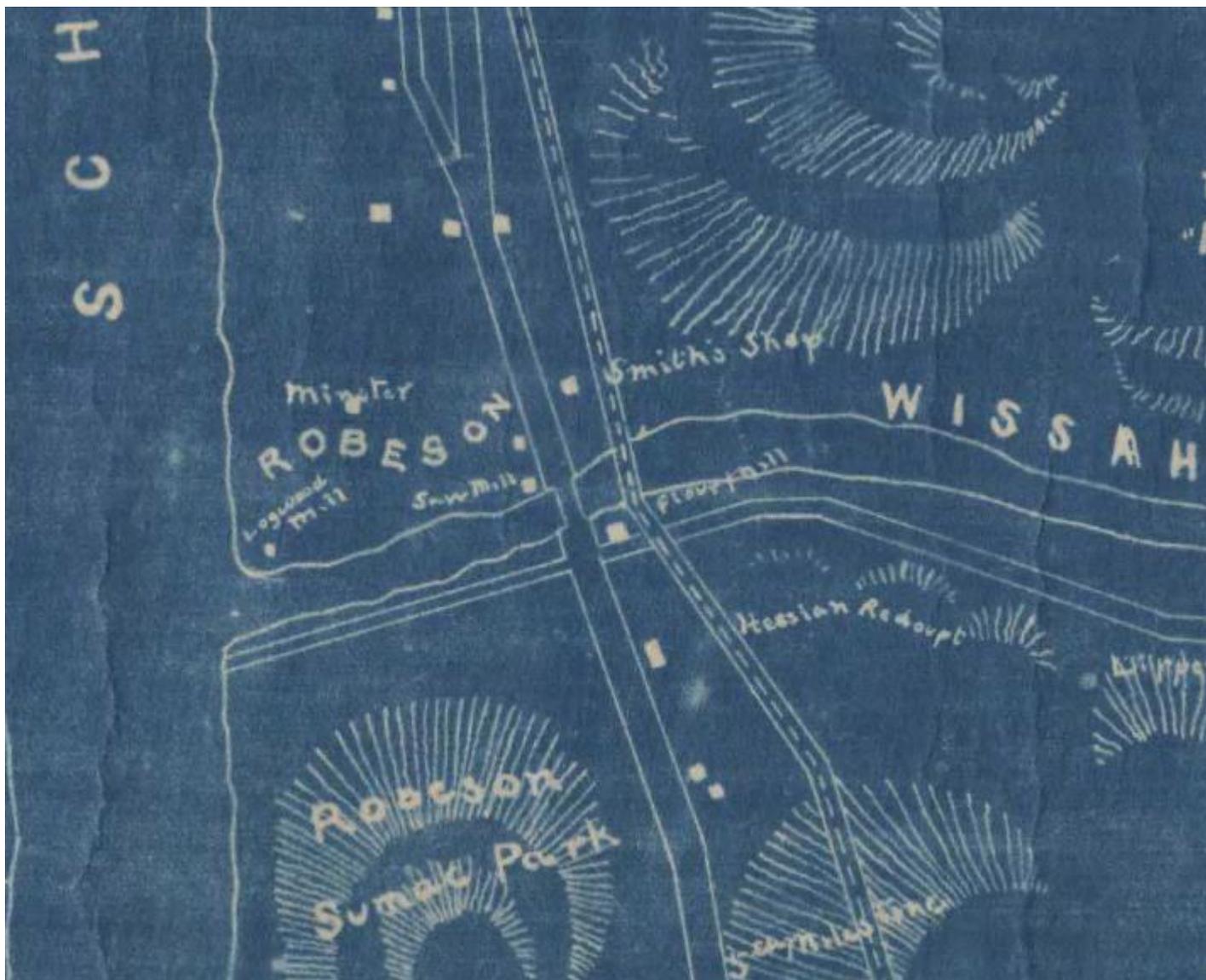


1848 "Plan of the Township of Roxborough with the property holders' names &c. Manayunk" by Jno. Levering. Surv. Published by M. Dripps, 1848., 1848

https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/FF-Maps_Dripps_Roxborough

Note that The Mill is labeled as a "Logwood Mill;" in 1848 per James F. Magee, Jr., the heirs of Andrew Robeson leased it to someone who made "paints and dyes from logwood."

See also the 1860 painting of the Milverton house lived in Geo. Minster and wife Sarah Robeson Minister and later occupied by Joseph Lea and Sarah Ann Robeson, the daughter of Peter Robeson.



1848 Related to the prior map. Below from the City Archive is a note from Jonathon Robeson about the problems with the flow of water to the Logwood Mill⁸⁸.

H. J. Williams,
Respected friends

This day I received thy note, and have to say, that some years ago my Brother Andrew Robeson purchased of Dr. Moore his Interest in the Estate, for which he received a Deed for the same from the Doctor, how long since I cannot say, I believe the Deed is recorded.

Our tenants that have the Logwood-mill at the mouth of the Wissahickon Creek, say they will have to come on us for damages, as the Mill cannot now manufacture half the wood that they could before the Dam at Fairmount was raised.

Respectfully thy friend
Jon^a Robeson

2mo 4 1848

The Schuylkill Navigation Co. completed the Fairmount Dam in 1821 below the water reservoir, just below Boathouse Row⁸⁹. This change raised the water level in the Tail race's sheeting which often interfered with the wheel's turning "...the Navigation Company, still acting by the agency of the corporation, have raised it higher." Court Decision 1852 <https://cite.case.law/grant/3/186/> The raising of the dam raised the level of water at the tail race to the Mill on the Wissahickon, Mill #1 (Robeson's Rolling Mill) and the rebuild of the Fairmount Dam in 1842-43 essentially ended its use as a Mill of any sort – the backflow from the River too often impeding the flow of water through, or rotation of the mill's waterwheel⁹⁰.

⁸⁸ A mill used to process logwood, the inner red wood of a South American tree used widely in dyeing. Imported in the form of logs and cut and ground into dye by a mechanical process.

⁸⁹ [76001662.pdf \(nps.gov\)](https://www.nps.gov/76001662.pdf)

⁹⁰ 2nd raising/rebuild dates 1842-43 which prompted 2nd suit by Robesons: [76001662.pdf \(nps.gov\)](https://www.nps.gov/76001662.pdf)

1850: The 1850 R. R. and Turnpike Bridge “over the Wissahickon” (left). From The Free Library Fairmount Park collection, c 1850. “Construction of the Ridge Turnpike began in 1812 and was completed in 1816.”⁹¹ Top text: “Taken from nature, June 1850, by the patent Talbotype process, by W. & F. Langenheim.”

The old wooden bridge at Ridge and the Creek burned down in September 1863 along with the then Dobson Mill. At first brush, it appears that the negative was inverted, left and right flipped, but on closer inspection, the Dobson mill can be seen on the far right – see left and right pictures far right. Ridge Road bridge looks the same in all three pictures, and wood added over the arch in second two pictures⁹², but the large building on left in first picture appears to be Mill #2, now a steam powered saw mill before it was torn down, a possibility based on article printed Year 1891⁹³. See also picture back in Year 1816 for saw mill/building with smoke stack.



⁹¹ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ridge_Pike

⁹² See here for another picture like one on left with arch on the R.R. bridge: <https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/59322>

⁹³ See here for full article written circa 1891 and author born circa 1833: <https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/zoom/61794>

1853 and 1855 Maps of the Vicinity of Philadelphia from actual surveys

<https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/HSF.D2G16> No reference to a Mill (Other than Robeson's)



1855 Robeson's Mill labeled on wrong side of the Wissahickon, at least the larger mill was. <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/HSF.D2D23>



1856 Scott's Map of the Consolidated City of Philadelphia <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/JDS1856.Phila.001>

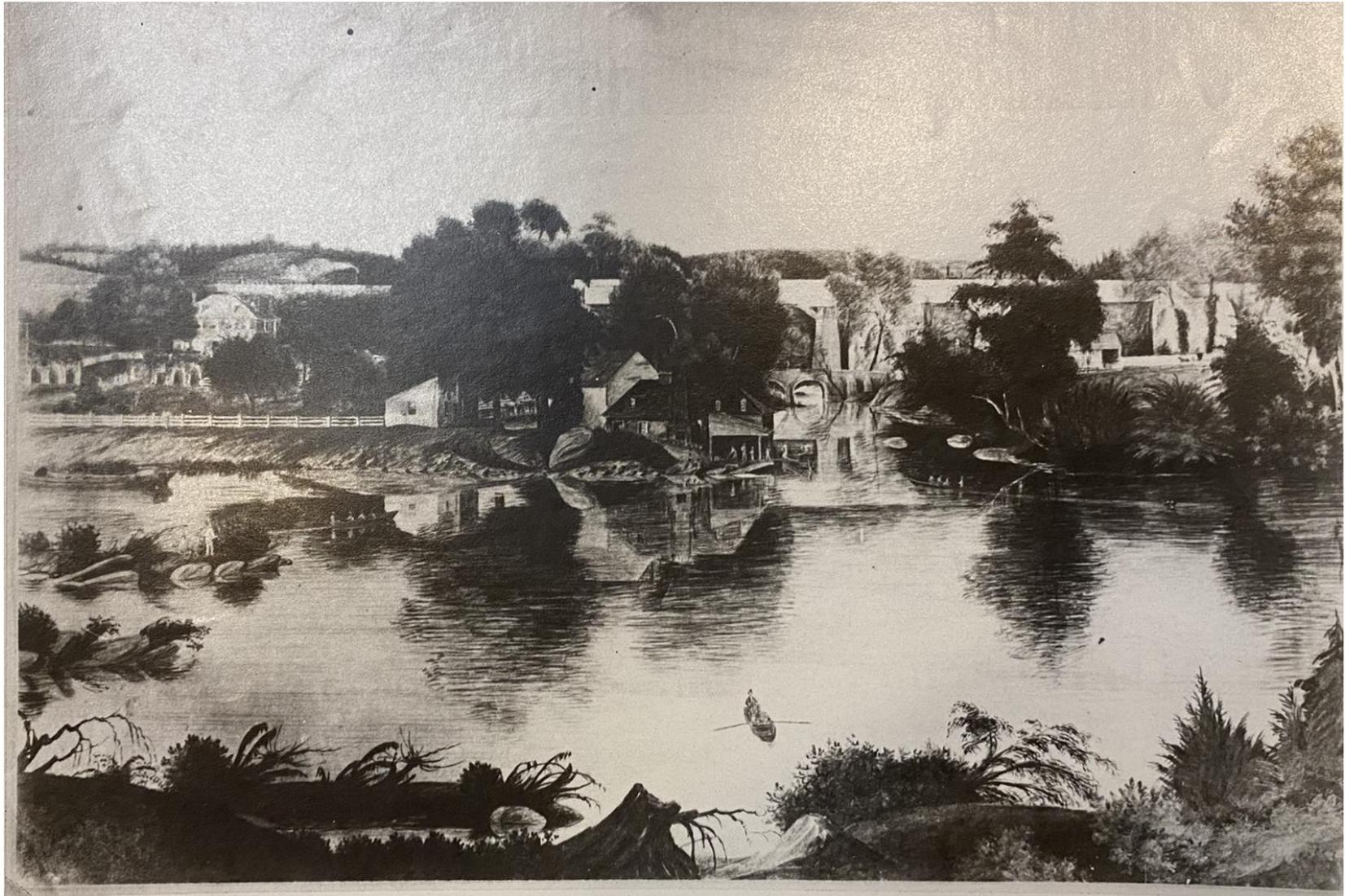
Robeson's Mill on correct, East side of the creek; no mill on the West side on the Schuylkill where Robeson's Rolling Mill should be/is now.



1862: Phial. Atlas no mill on either side for the Creek <https://www.philageohistory.org/tiles/viewer/?SelectedLayers=Overlay,SMD1860>



Circa 1860 est. Picture of a painting, artist unknown. Picture by Bullock, John G <https://digital.librarycompany.org/islandora/object/digitool%3A4233>



Copy of a painting depicting Milverton and the Mill from the west bank of the Schuylkill River looking northeast. Occupied by Joseph Lea and Sarah Ann Robeson, the daughter of Peter Robeson, who purchased the nearby estate in Shoomac Park the year Sarah was born. Located immediately north of the Wissahickon Creek near Ridge Avenue. In the background, a train crosses the Norristown Railroad Bridge, which dwarfs the Ridge Avenue Bridge in front of it. Another house sits on a hill north of Milverton. There is activity on and near the river in the foreground.

1862 – 1955: The Fairmount Park, The Fishing Co. & the Philadelphia Canoe Club

1863 Map of the Wissahickon Valley as copied from the 1863 Map of the U.S. Coast Survey <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/AS-60> No Legend: a smallish building seems to be on the map where the Roxboro Mill now stands. Larger, dark building would be Milverton house. Across Ridge Road on other side of the Wissahickon is the Mill, originally Robeson's Mill, later Vandereen's Mill (1760). Building on left/North side of the Creek just South of Ridges could be Mill #2.



1863 Map of a reconnaissance of the approaches to Philadelphia showing the positions and lines of defense on the north front of the city.

<https://www.loc.gov/resource/g3824p.cw0358250/?r=0.367,0.436,0.07,0.032,0> .

Similar to other map, and one likely copied in part from the other. No Legend, but smallish building seems to be on the map where the Robeson's Rolling Mill now stands. Larger, dark building should be Milverton house.



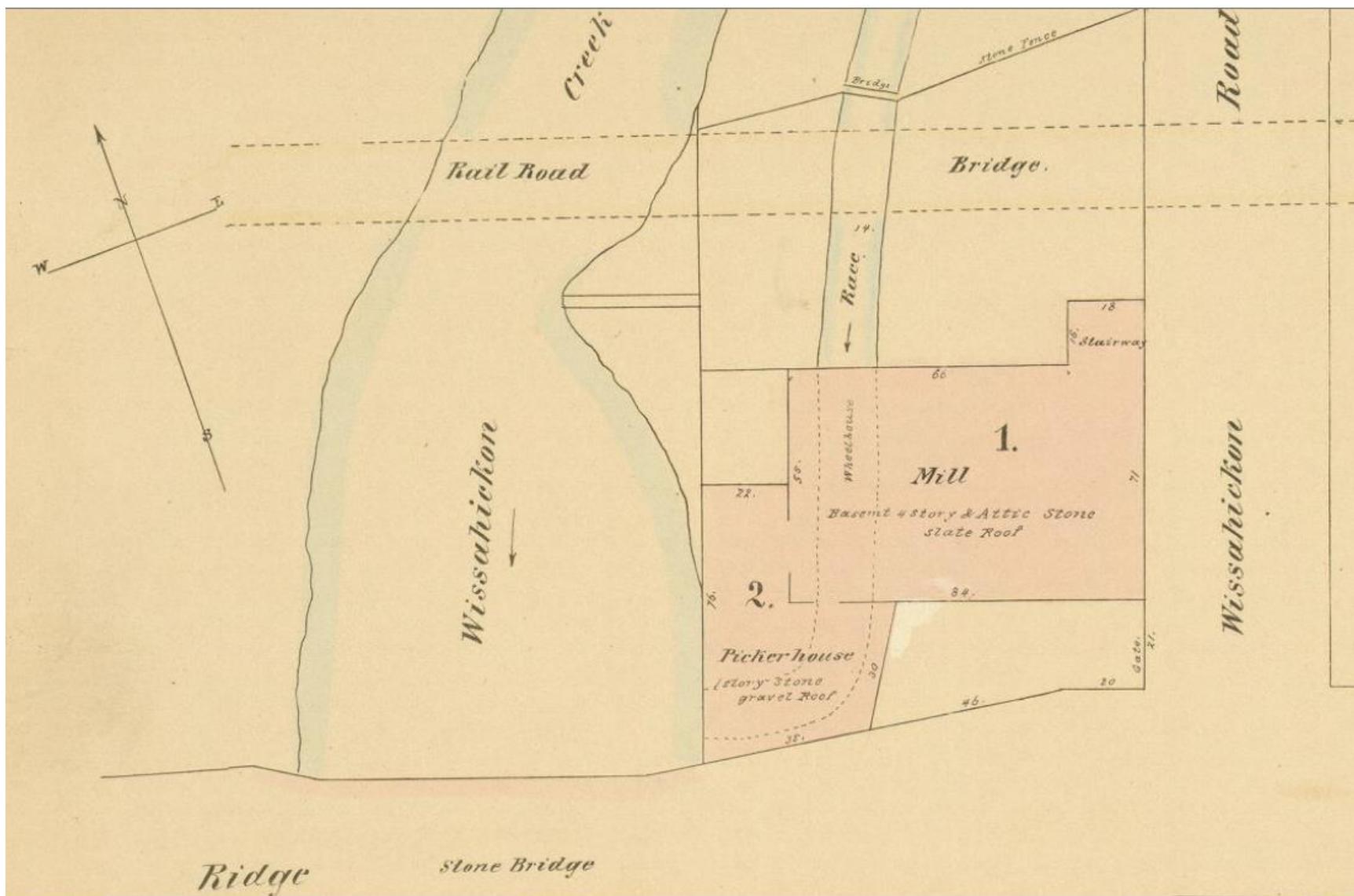
1860 Map of the Philadelphia Region, Pennsylvania, 1860

http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/mg/di/m011/PDFs/m011Map0376_Section11.pdf

See "G Mill" where the Wissahickon meets the Schuylkill – perhaps the Robeson's Rolling Mill, but exact location of the mill hard to determine. Likely could be Mill #2 right on Ridge which seems was converted from being a Saw-Mill to a Grist mill.



1862-1864 – **Not** Robeson’s Rolling Mill: **John Dobson’s Mill** - Wissahickon Hexamer General Surveys, Vol. 1 Plate 3 <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/HGSv1.0003> **Before the fire in 1862** – see next page with much larger mill drawn by Hexamer 1869-1870 **and four waterwheels in serial sequence.** Shown here to illustrate the very wide mill Race. This was the key mill in the area on North side of Ridge Ave. and South side of the Wissahickon. Hexamer has no drawings of mills South of Ridge Ave., but Robeson’s Rolling Mill was not functioning by this time, about the time Fairmount Park acquired it (about 1869).

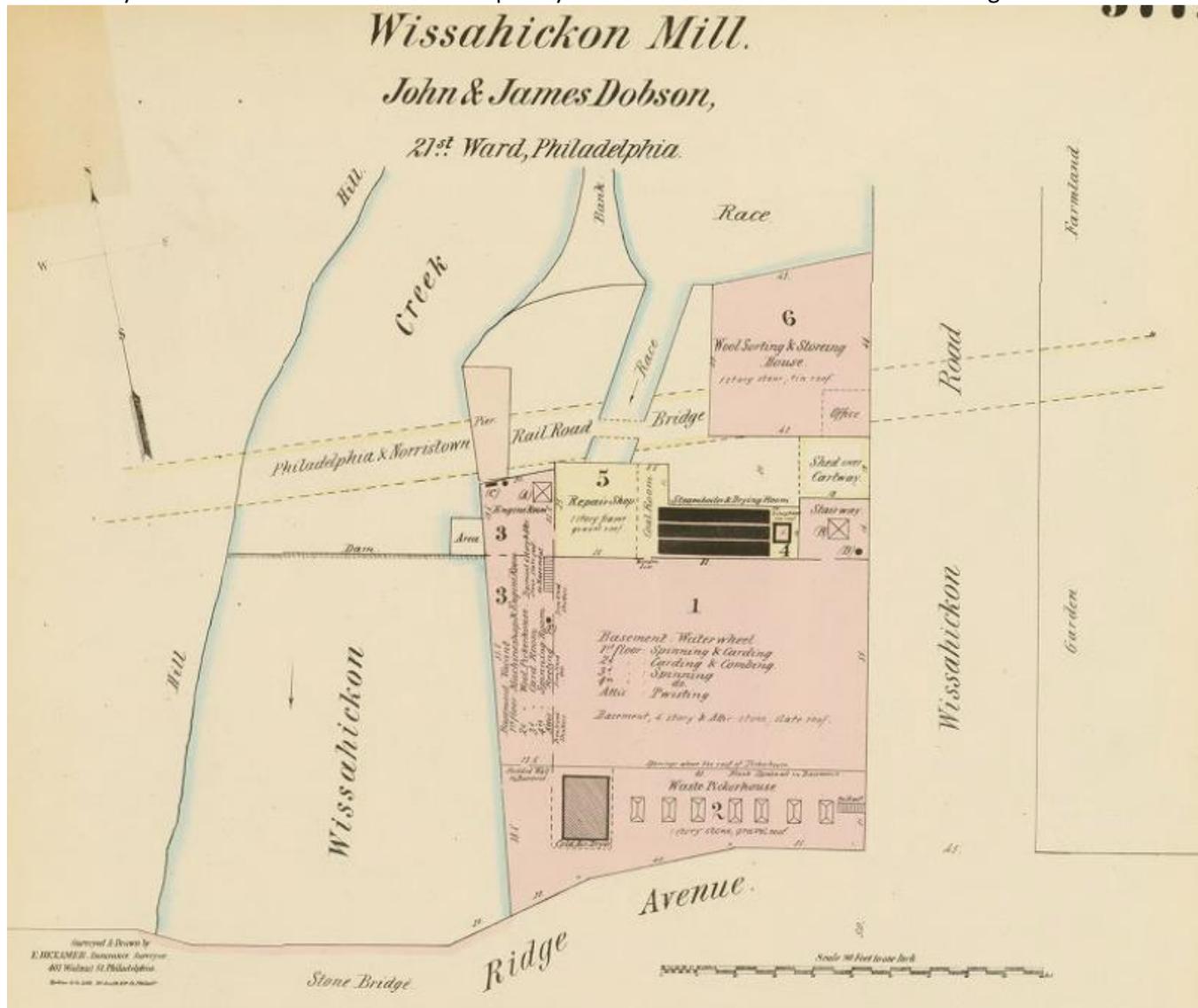


#2. Reads “Picker house 1 story stone, gravel roof.” General definition: a small mill was once a “picker” house, where cotton was first received in rough form and picked before being sent over to the sister mill for processing into textiles.

1866⁹⁴-1867 – **Not** Robeson's Rolling Mill: **New** Wissahickon Mill now partially **Steam/Coal** powered. <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/HGSv5.0377> **BUT** note the **four waterwheels in serial sequence**.

Hexamer General Surveys, Volume 5 page/Plate 377 link above. **Note:** Dating Hexamer maps is not exact See also Plate 3 <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/HGSv1.0003> and see Plate 272 Vol. 4 Ed. Magarge Mill: <https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/12634>

Presented here as this was the key mill in the area and show the complexity of the water into the mill and its workings.



⁹⁴ Reference old mill burning 1866: <http://lcweb2.loc.gov/master/pnp/habshaer/pa/pa0800/pa0884/data/pa0884data.pdf>

1866 reference to Mills on the Wissahickon “None of which remain” (which were there 1866)

https://books.google.com/books?id=pgINAAAAYAAJ&pg=PA4&lpg=PA4&dq=Wissahickon+Grist+mill+roxborough&source=bl&ots=p-i0-DIEeG&sig=ACfU3U3OM_fzftHjoilzjpBWkiqUkyIQ&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKEwjDk5Lzi_P0AhUlj4kEHQH5D4gQ6AF6BAg-EAM#v=onepage&q=Wissahickon%20Grist%20mill%20roxborough&f=false

Victorian Roxborough: An Architectural History by John C. Manton

Page 6

By 1866 a preliminary survey for procuring a supply of water by gravitation for the City of Philadelphia revealed no less than thirty-three mills in existence along the nineteen-mile length of the **Wissahickon** Creek. Amongst these thirty-three mills were sixteen **grist** mills, six saw mills, three woollen mills, three cotton mills, two paper mills, one carpet **mill**, one oil **mill**, and one print works,¹² none of which remain today.

Shoomac Park documentation and reference to Mill on NW side of the Creek:

<http://lcweb2.loc.gov/master/pnp/habshaer/pa/pa0800/pa0884/data/pa0884data.pdf>

In **1864** the entire Robeson estate was offered for sale. A plan of the property in the Historical Society of Pennsylvania (Mss Division) shows Shoomac Park with mill and a **saw-mill, this latter mill was south of Ridge Road and west of the Creek**. All this part of the estate is marked "D" or "Dobson" and the price \$30,000 has "been noted.

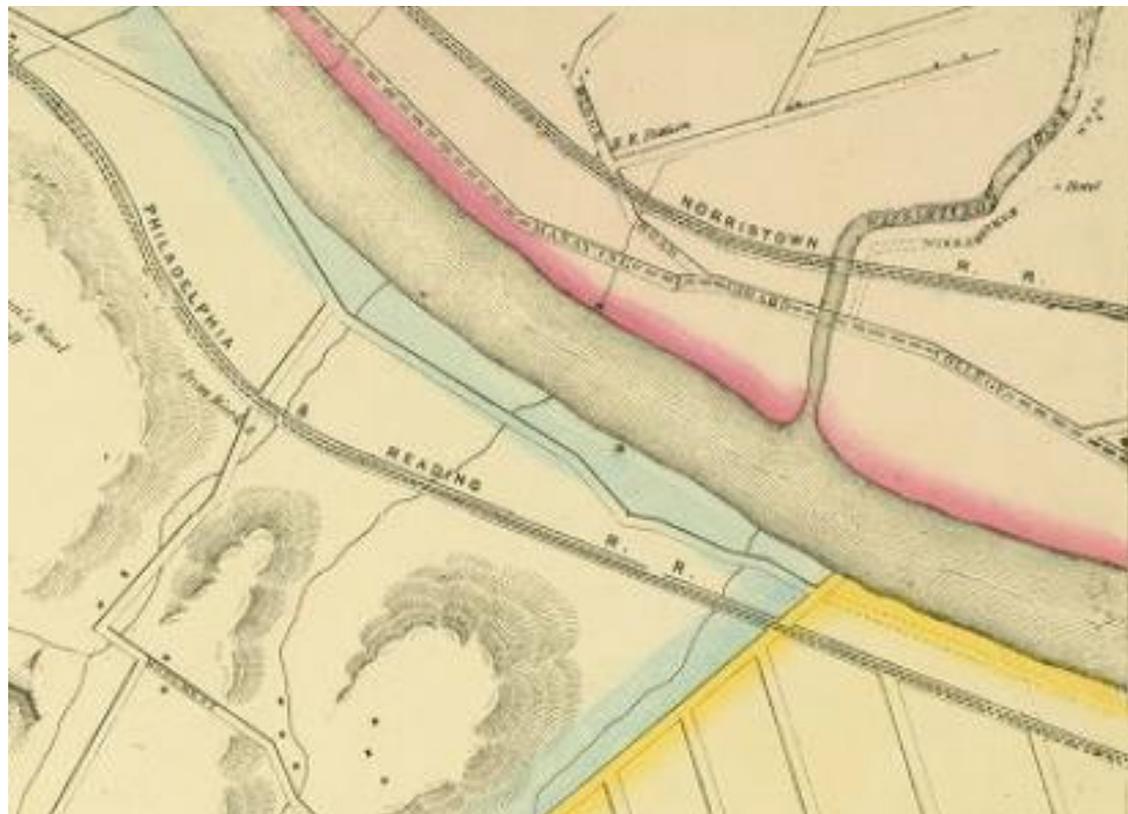
John and Joseph Dobson, the purchasers, were carpet manufacturers and they carried on their "business in the old mill until it was burned in 1866. **A new mill was built on the site of the old one and according to Thomas Shoemaker: "This proved a very valuable property, yielding— six hundred thousand dollars in profits before its purchase by the Park Commission..." (See india ink sketch of John Dobson's mill in Thomas Shoemaker Collection, portfolio 3-b HSP)**

The Fairmount Park Commission purchased the mill site and most of the original Robeson tract for the Park in 1872, but the Dobson Company kept the old house and some of the grounds around it.

Robeson's Rolling Mill is the exception to the statement "none remain today."

1867 Map of the Whole Incorporated City of Philadelphia <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/RLB1867.Phila.007.Plate6>

No reference to Robeson's Rolling Mill or a building on the site.



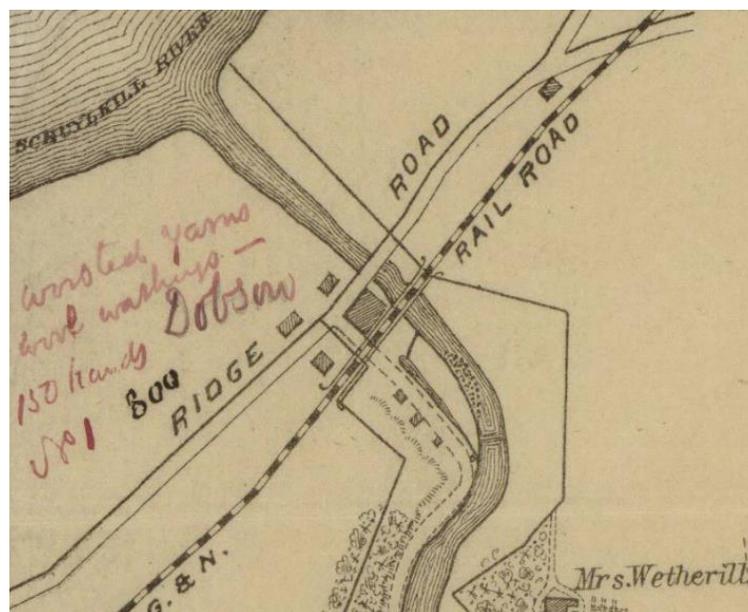
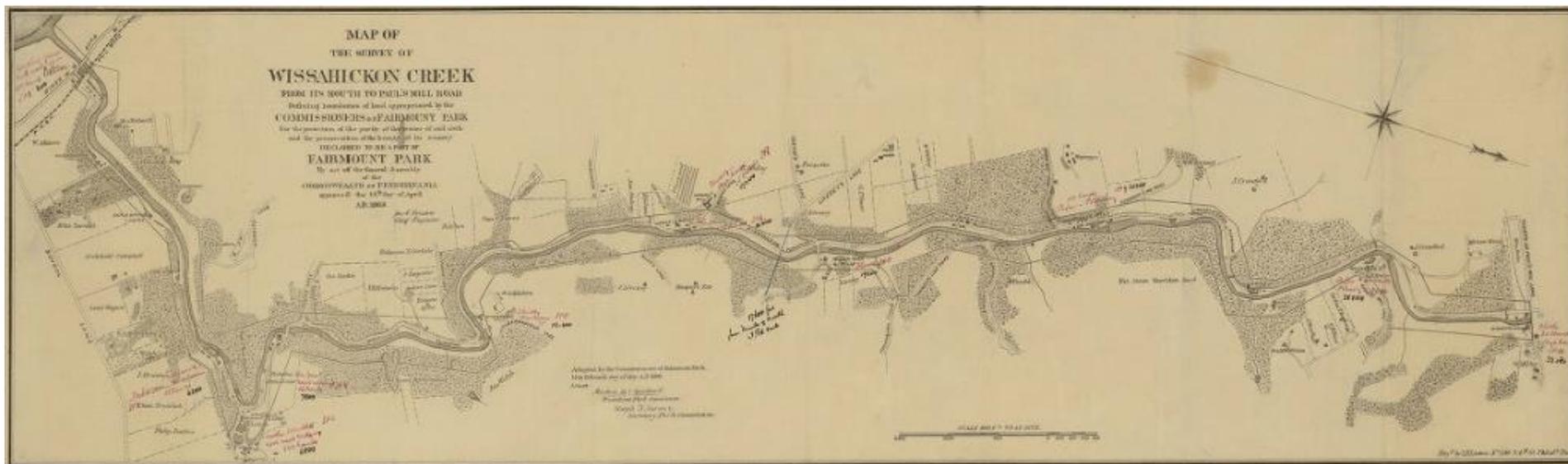
1868 Fairmount Park: Map of farms and lots embraced within the limits of Fairmount Park as appropriated for public use by Act of Assembly, approved the 14th day of April, A.D. 1868 <https://collections.leventhalmap.org/search/commonwealth:4m90fd18g> or <https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/40473>

Land North of Ridge (Shoomac Park) and Northwest side of the Wissahickon (Robeson's Rolling Mill) is not yet part of the Park as of April 1868, seemly not yet approved for purchase. No 'Robeson's Rolling Mill' on map, but the map was of the Park and not the surrounding area.



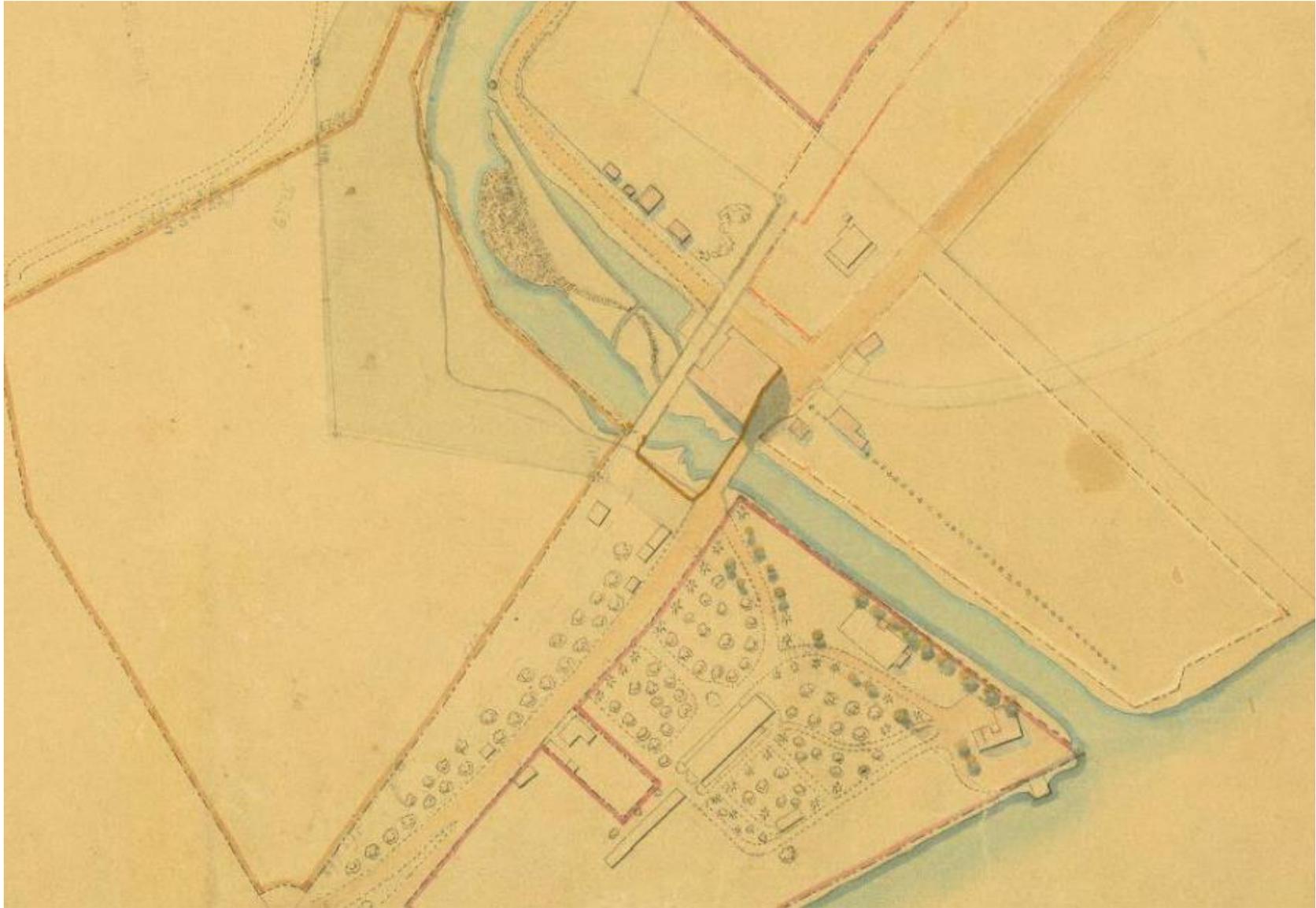
1868 Map Of the Survey of Wissahickon Creek, 1868 CREATOR: Cresson, John, Surveyor; Linton, S.B., Engraver <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/GR.II.10>

Park land now includes The Robeson's Rolling Mill location north of Ridge Avenue and its mill pond. Month/day 14 April 1868.

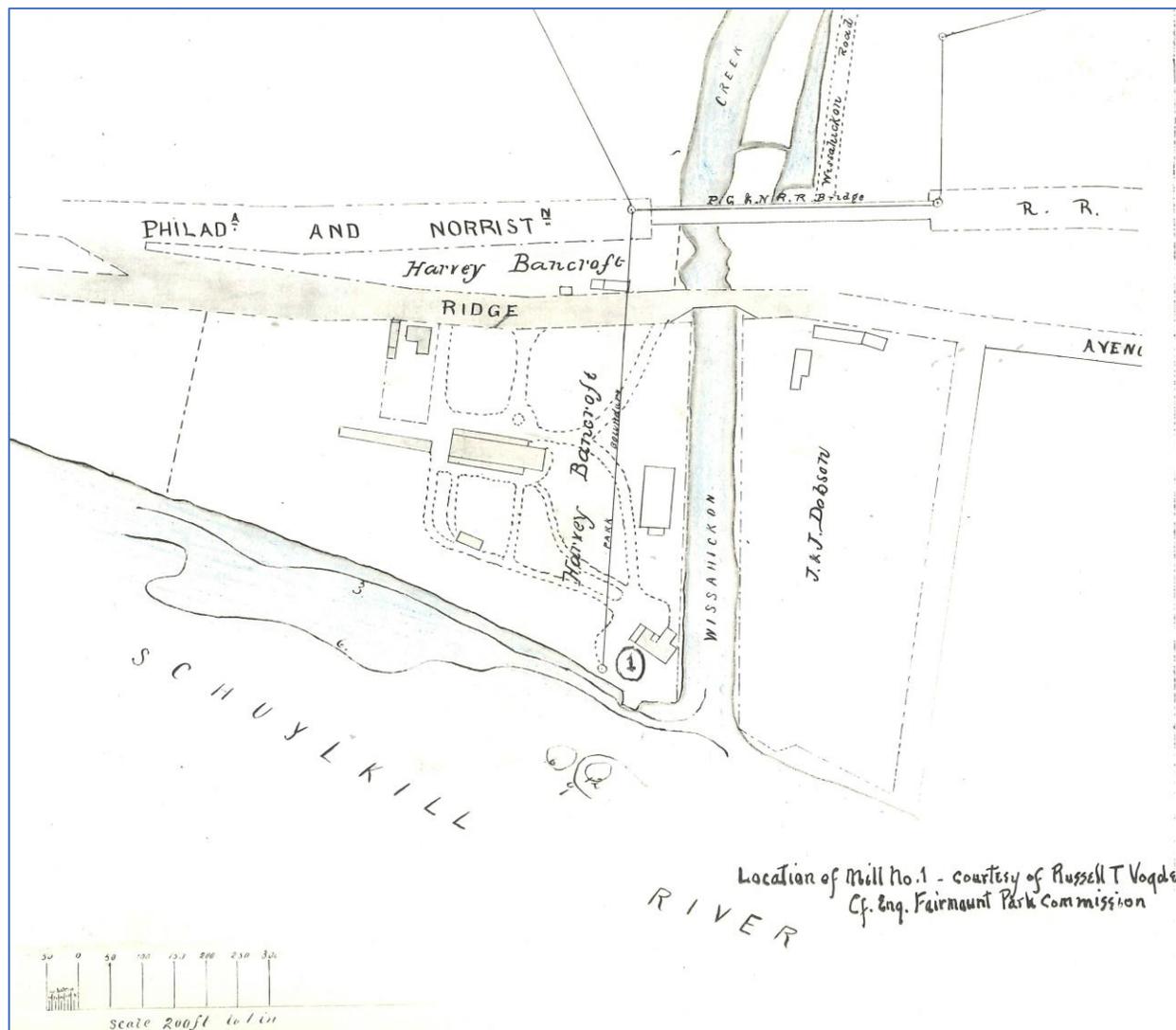


1868 Survey of the Wissahickon Valley, 1868 Southern Segment (Month, day unknown) <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/AS-52>

Note The Robeson's Rolling Mill and other building and a dock. All seem to be part of Milverton, which became "Riverside Mansion" after John F. Betz purchased the mansion (date tbd, est. 1870 or after). Mary Lea Minster and George Minster, after death of Mary Lea Minster (Mary C Lea is a descendent of Andrew Robeson) sold the mansion and land to Harvey Bancroft, who sold most of the land to Betz. Bancroft kept the slice along the west bank of the Creek that contained the Robeson Rolling Mill and sold the Mill and that slice to the Fairmount Park 23 Sep 1874. The large building on the Creek just north of the Rolling Mill may have been the Nail Factory described in the 1820 Census.



1868 Same year as prior map but with owner's name. The map was given to D. Macfarlan "Location of Mill No. 1 - Courtesy of Russell Vogdes, Cf. Eng. Fairmount Park Commission" and a Harvey Bancroft⁹⁵ owned 'Milverton' / the Riverside Mansion before the Park took a slice on the North bank of the Wissahickon Creek. And this is before John F. Betz purchased the house and the land not annexed by the City along the Wissahickon⁹⁶.



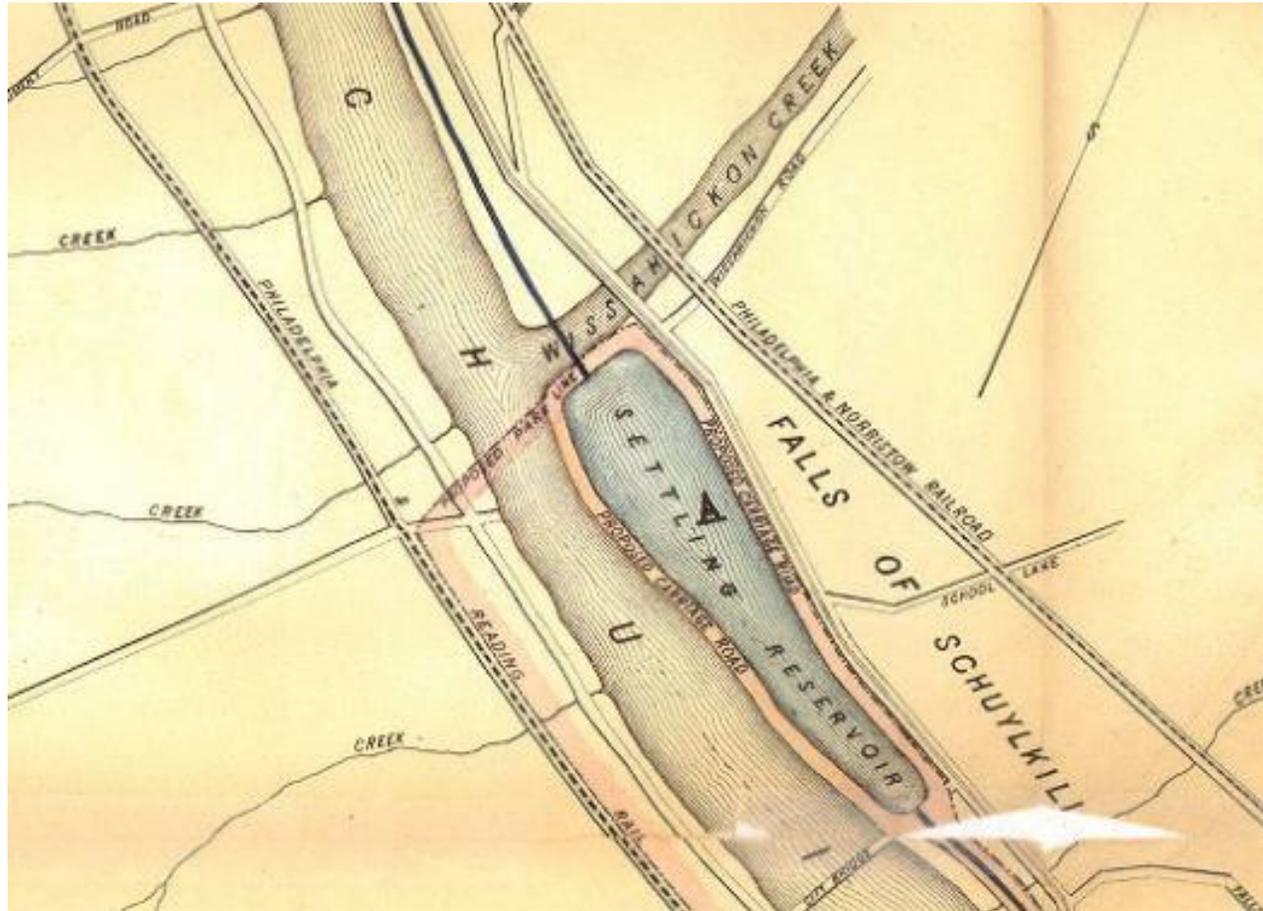
⁹⁵ U.S., City Directories, 1822-1995 for Harvey Bancroft, b. 1815, d. 1893 – address 1867:

⁹⁶ Deed City Grantee and H. Bancroft Grantor: F.T.W. Book 150, Page 352, Dated 1874 September 23

Bancroft Harvey (Bancroft, Baché & Co.) h
Ridge av n Wissahickon

1868 Proposed plan for supplying the City of Philadelphia with pure water from Flat Rock Dam, without interfering with the sewerage of the City, or the immense manufacturing interest located below said dam. 1868 (circa) <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/PWD1868-1>

Note no reference to any buildings on The Robeson's Rolling Mill location, and the reservoir was never built.



1870 Map of Philadelphia (Reduced from Smedley's Complete Atlas of Philadelphia) <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/HSF.D2D6>

No buildings on The Robeson's Rolling Mill site, but other buildings such as Robeson House and Mill missing. Note open flood plain to south of the mouth of the Creek. See another view in 1863 here: [Map of a reconnaissance of the approaches to Philadelphia showing the positions and lines of defense on the north front of the city | Library of Congress \(loc.gov\)](#)



1875 City Atlas of Philadelphia, Vol. 2, Wards 21 https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/GMH1875.PhilaWards21_28.003.Index



Pre-1862⁹⁷ 'Scenes on the Wissahickon', **1874 Published date.** 'Mouth of the Wissahickon' Creator: John J. Harley

"Its water-power has been made available for manufacturing purposes; but, as it has lately been included within the limits of Fairmount Park, it is understood that the unromantic mill-buildings will be soon removed (*except for The Robeson's Rolling Mill*), and nothing allowed to remain which can in any way interfere with its wild and picturesque beauty..., these objectionable structures are not wholly unsightly; and the factories...are so shaded by foliage that, in conjunction with the arches of the bridges nearby, they offer tempting bits of form and color for the artist's pencil. From "Picturesque America; or The Land We Live In, A Delineation by Pen and Pencil of the Mountains, Rivers, Lakes...with Illustrations on Steel and Wood by Eminent American Artists" Vol. II, edited by William Cullen Bryant. [D. Appleton and Company, New York, 1874].



An **artist's rendering** and before The Schuylkill Fishing Company of the State of the Schuylkill leased the building. See also here for Mill #3:

<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/pga.10625/> See Endnote Free Library Links^{xvi}

See map for The Schuylkill Fishing Company site in 1828 in center, across from Bartram's Botanic Garden: -- [Philadelphia Architects and Buildings \(philadelphiabuildings.org\)](http://Philadelphia Architects and Buildings (philadelphiabuildings.org))

⁹⁷ The Mill of the right and the wooden RR Bridged burned down in 1862.

1863 Norristown Railroad Bridge across the Wissahickon Creek <http://digital.librarycompany.org/islandora/object/digitool%3A100797>

View showing the Philadelphia, Germantown, and Norristown Railroad temporary trestle-work bridge over the mouth of the creek. The temporary bridge replaced the second permanent bridge (completed in 1845 and razed by the Robeson Mill fire of August 1862). Construction of the new permanent bridge (also known as the Wissahickon Creek Viaduct or High Stone Bridge) was begun in 1874 by the new owners, the Philadelphia and Reading Railroad. Due to budgetary constraints, construction was halted and later completed from 1881-1882. Also shows the mill ruins, the Ridge Avenue Bridge, and two men, including possibly Edward Moran, sitting on the bank of the creek.



1876 Map and guide of Fairmount Park showing the Schuylkill and Wissahickon Valleys, 1876 <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/AS-54>

Park land now extends onto The Robeson's Rolling Mill side of the Creek, but no building on map - but other buildings such as Robeson House and Mill missing. Note proposed "Park Bridge."



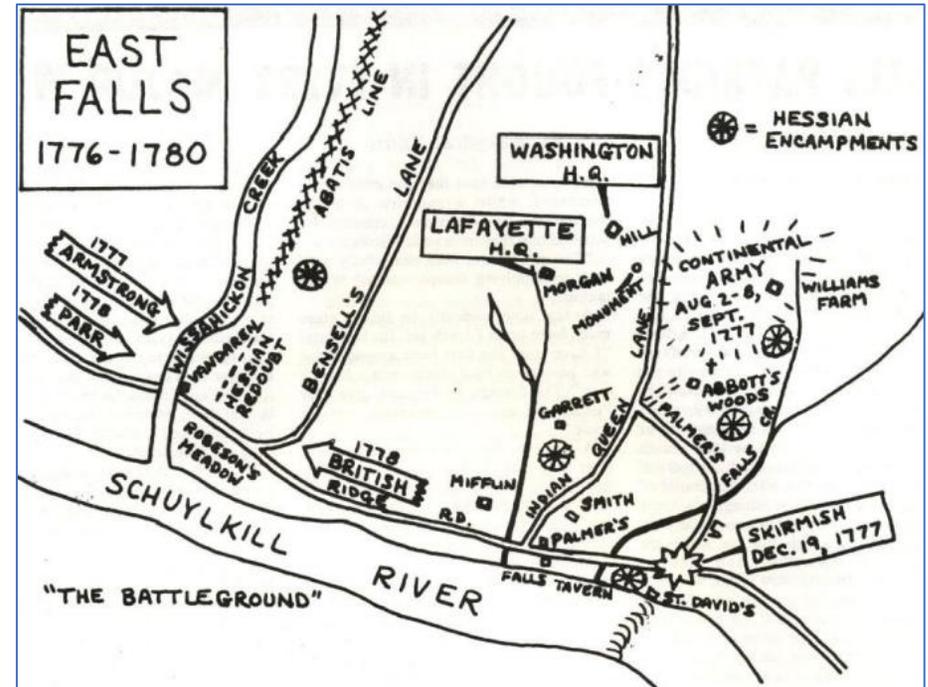
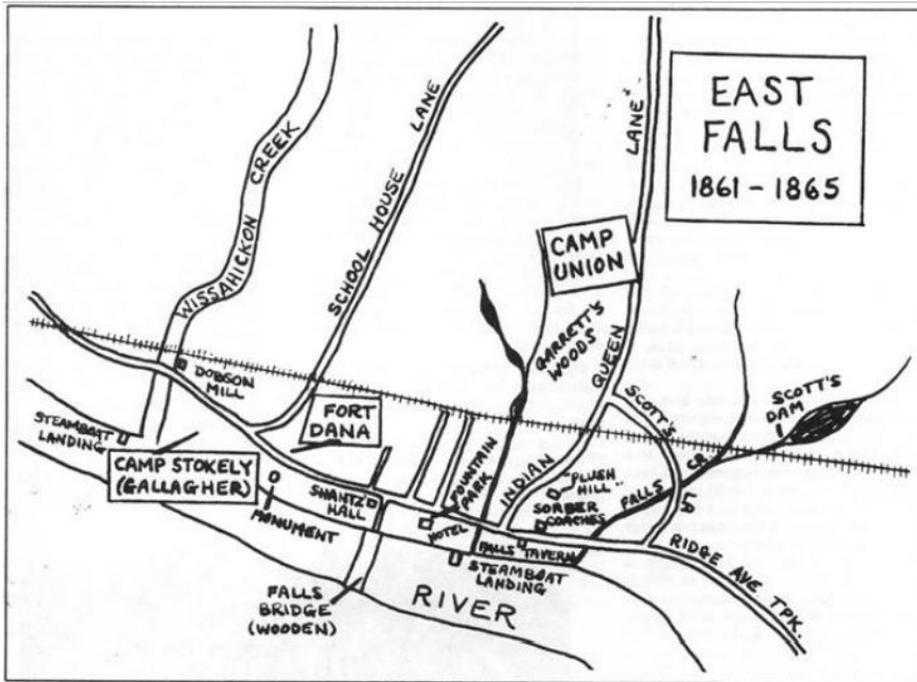


21st Ward with a Building, but it is near Ridge Ave. and not in area in green, the Fairmount Park



1860 Map from the East Falls Bicentennial⁹⁸ (School House Lane was earlier known as **Bensell's Lane** – see another map on the right same source.)

Shown here to note the presence of a “Steamboat Landing” on the land then owned by Harvey Bancroft c. 1862-1869 until sale to the City.



See far left portion of the 1869 map “Map of the survey of Wissahickon Creek from its mouth to Paul's Mill Road, defining boundaries of land appropriated by the Commissioners of Fairmount Park for the protection of the purity of the water of said creek and the preservation of the beauty of its scenery. Declared to be a part of Fairmount Park by Act of the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania approved the 14th day of April A.D. 1868. Adopted by the Commissioners of Fairmount Park this fifteenth day of May A.D. 1869. Attest: [Signed] Morton M. McMichael, President Park Commission; [signed] Joseph F. Mercer, Secretary Park Commission., 1869.” It is as if the surveyor and the Park Commissioners agreed to not document the existence of the mill and, therefore, not be forced to remove it. www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/Streets-2H-15

Note too the very large size of the Mill Pond leading to the mill north of Ridge Ave.

⁹⁸ [East Falls - 300 Years of History Part 2.pdf \(wsimg.com\)](http://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/Streets-2H-15) see page 57

1877 Picture. The picture estimated as being c. 1877 taken at the time the Schuylkill Fishing Company of the State of the Schuylkill leased the building. Date per book "History of the Schuylkill Fishing Company of the State in Schuylkill."⁹⁹ See three men in middle on right, one or two may the cooking white aprons the Club member's wear. The Fishing Company moved their Castle on Rambo's Rock and Club to Andalusia in 1887, but reported leased the mill on the Wissahickon until 1902 ([Castle, State of Schuylkill - Digital Collections - Free Library](#)).

Also, of greater note, the South bank of the Wissahickon Creek was then much lower than now, and that area acted as a flood plain. See the 1870 – 1876 maps to see that flood plain.

In 1869, the Schuylkill River reportedly crested 17 ft. while Hurricane Ida in Sept. 2021 crested at 16 ft. 4 inches. Ida's 16.4 measurement was taken at Latitude: 39.968 Longitude: -75.189 which is across from the Water Works and Boat House Row. It is believed that the 1869 measurement was in about the same place. The Robeson Mill #1 stood across and North from a flood plain that would have greatly widened the River and most likely than not raised the level in the building as high as occurred during Ida in 2021. See 1860-1877 maps for views of that flood plain



⁹⁹ https://books.google.com/books?id=MOE_AAAAYAAJ&pg=PA41&source=gbs_toc_r&cad=3#v=snippet&q=wissahickon&f=false

1891 est. (based on copyright date reverse side of article) Section of an article "The Old Wissahickon - Recollections of the Stream Fifty Years ago {1821}, from the Schuylkill to Gorgas Lane" by Wm. M. Runkel (Could be same Wm. M. Runkel who authored "The United States Mint : A Brief History of the Institution, with a Full Description of the Manner in Which Gold, Silver, Nickel and Copper Are Converted Into Money" and was a First Lieutenant 3rd Regiment, Pennsylvania Heavy Artillery in Civil War.)

<https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/zoom/61794>

Selected sections: Transcription to be added; read down then to right.

On the left bank of the creek over fifty years ago, just at its confluence with the Schuylkill, stood an old grist mill to which the farmers of the Falls and neighborhood came with their grain to be ground. It has been many things since. It ceased operation over forty years ago, and since then has been put in repair and has trailing vines growing all over it. It is used by the celebrated Schuylkill Fishing Club as a club house. This club dates back to the Revolution, and on its rolls can be found some of the most illustrious names of Philadelphia.

Above the old grist mill, where there formerly existed a forebay or head race, the grounds were full of grand old trees and the race was full of fish. But the race has been filled up since then, many of the trees have died, and now but a grassy passageway to the gate alone marks where once stood the old sawmill.

This sawmill to the children of the neighborhood was a source of great delight. The dragging of the logs from the creek below, the swift moving truck on which the logs were fed to the saw, and the saw itself, were all objects of childish wonder and delight. ~~Compare the buzzing saws~~

Two sentences in the last paragraph: "A new dam has been built (c. 1821) in place of the original dams, but there is now no use for the lower one and it might be done away with, with advantage to the appearance of the stream. The lower dam was built to supply the saw and grist mill on the left bank, and the upper one the grist mill on the right.

Two little houses stood on the right of the road just after crossing beneath the railroad bridge, and were nearly as old as the mill itself. The people who lived in the houses worked in the mill. Nature made most of the road around the Wissahickon, from the Ridge pike to the old log cabin. Above here the hand of man came in and a junction was made with Rittenhouse's lane on the Paper Mill Run, and the road was completed along the banks of the creek to the old bridge, thence crossing the stream and passing on up to Roxborough. It had been used as a road between Germantown and the Schuylkill in 1732, or thereabout, and that part around the creek, was known among the people of the section as the Creek road. It is now in possession of the Park, but has not been changed except from the Ridge pike to the first turn, where broken stones have been placed on the drive and the trees cut from margins of the stream. A new dam has been built in place of the original dams,

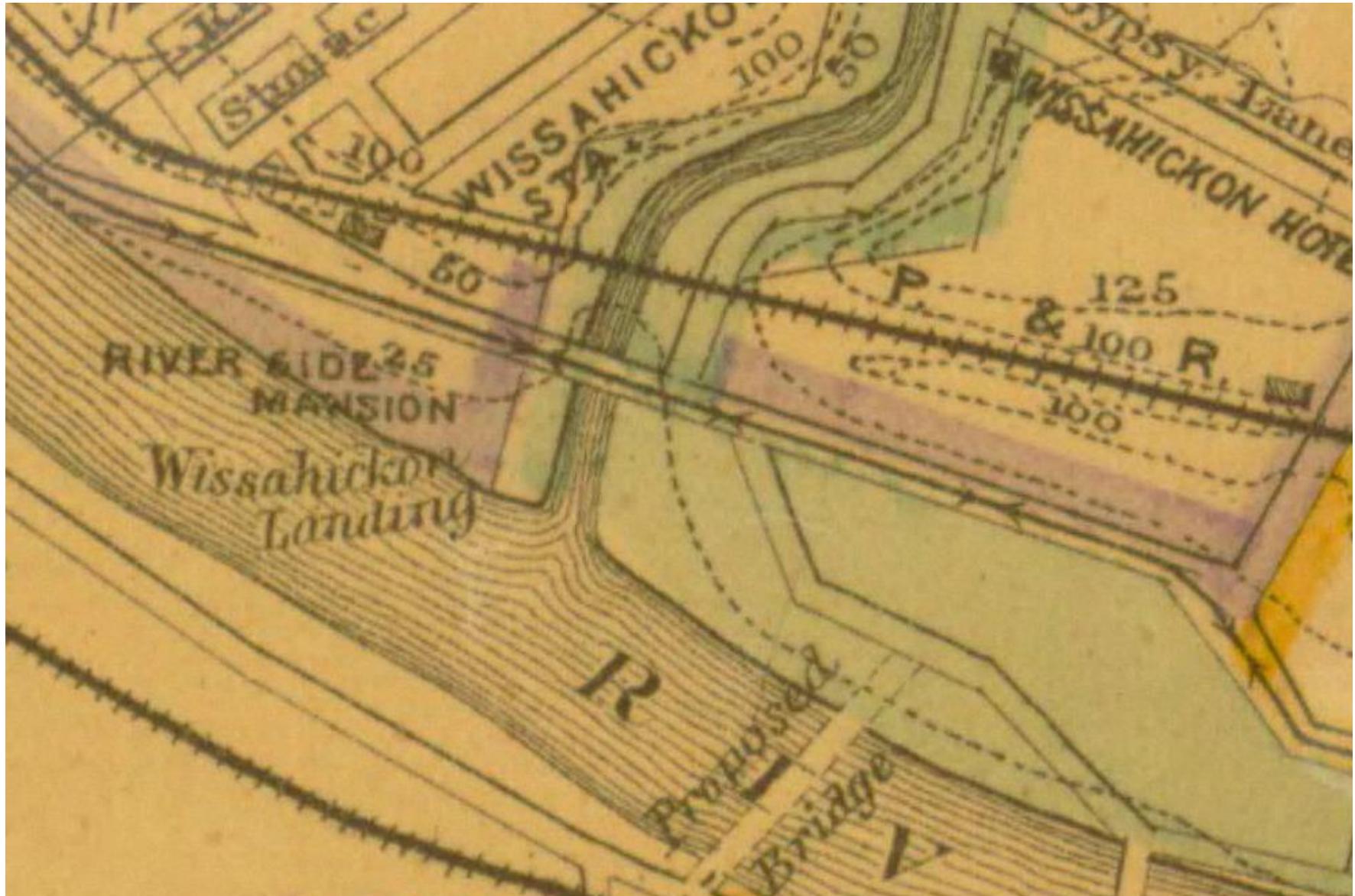
but there is now no use for the lower one and it might be done away with with advantage to the appearance of the stream. The lower dam was built originally to supply the saw and grist mill on the left bank, and the upper one the grist mill on the right.

1888 Noll's new official guide map of Philadelphia https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/FF-Maps_Noll1888

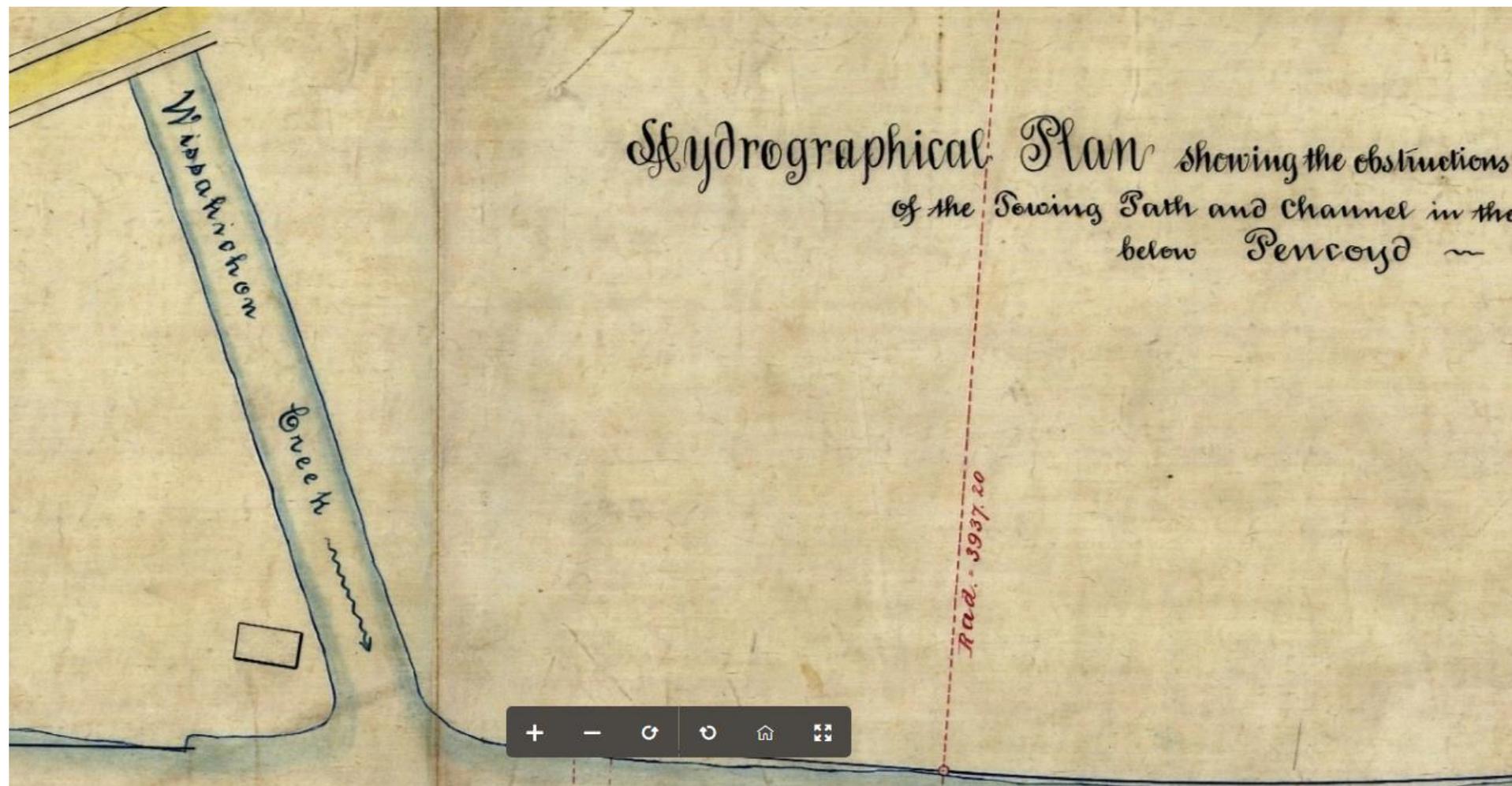
Same in 1889 https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/FF-Maps_Noll1889_HMFPPRWCO

Same in 1890 <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/PWD1890-1>

Interesting references to "River Side Mansion" and "Wissahickon Landing."



From a different Collection Schuylkill Navigation System Collection Item Reach 1-3-orig.



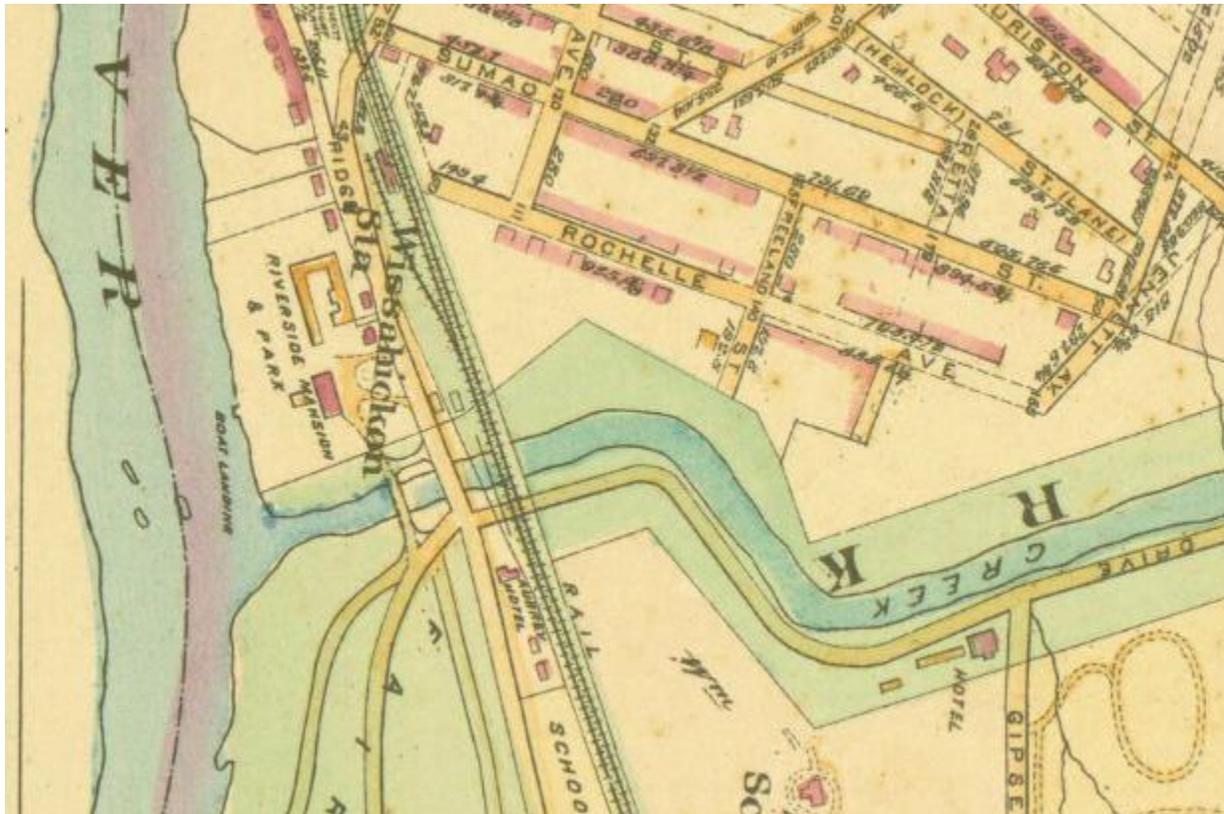
1890 Noll's New Road, Driving and Bicycle Map of Philadelphia and Surrounding County <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/HSF.D2G13>

Riverside Mansion on this map appears to be in the Fairmount Park and near The Robeson's Rolling Mill location – see next map.



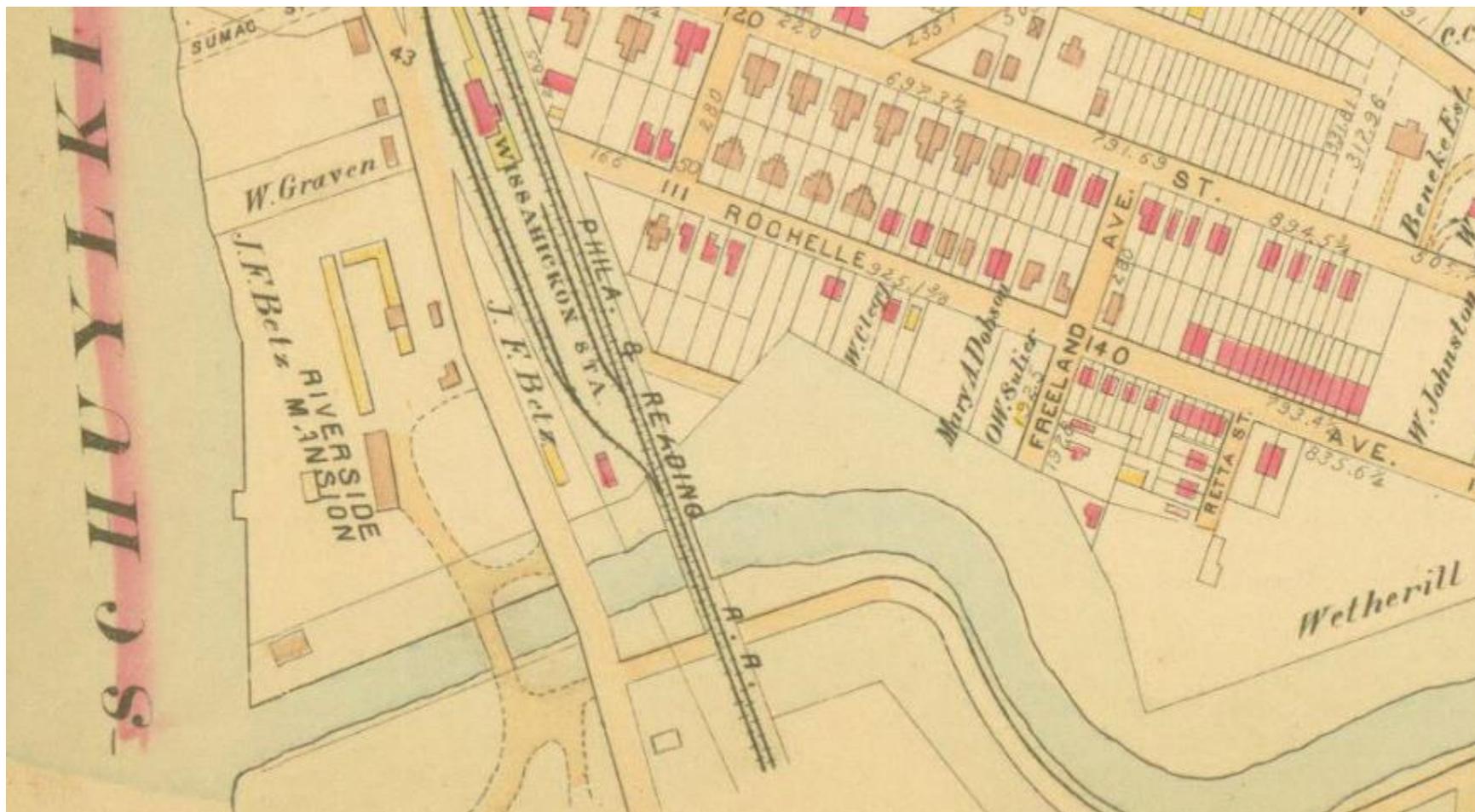
1893 Baist's Atlas of the Properties in the Northwest Suburbs of Philadelphia, 1893 <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/BST1893.NWBurbs.016.Plate14>

Riverside Mansion to West of The Robeson's Rolling Mill (not on map).



1895 Baist's Property Atlas of the City and County of Philadelphia, Penna, complete in one volume, 1895, Plan 39 <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/BST1895.Phila.041.Plan39>

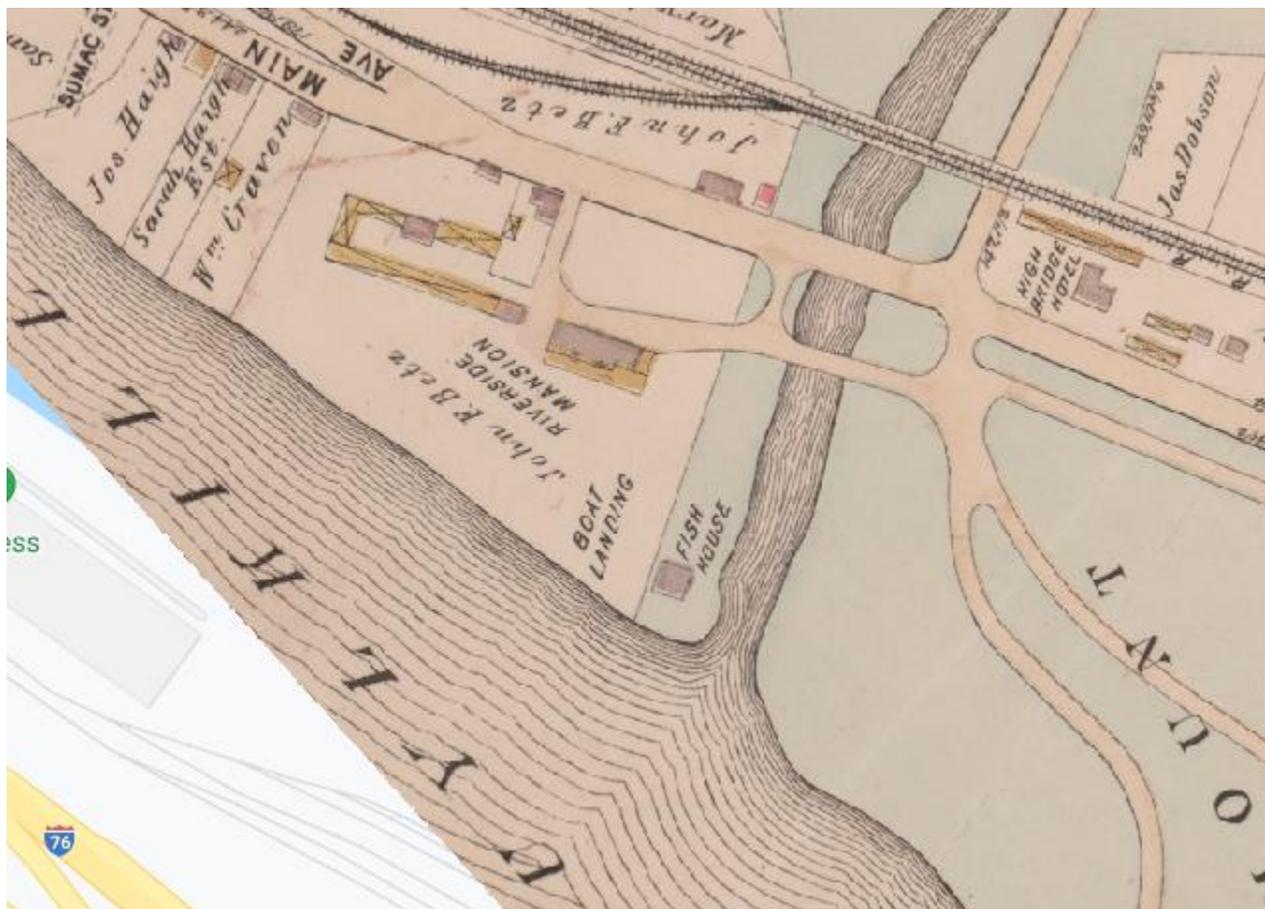
The Robeson's Rolling Mill appears on the map, unnamed.



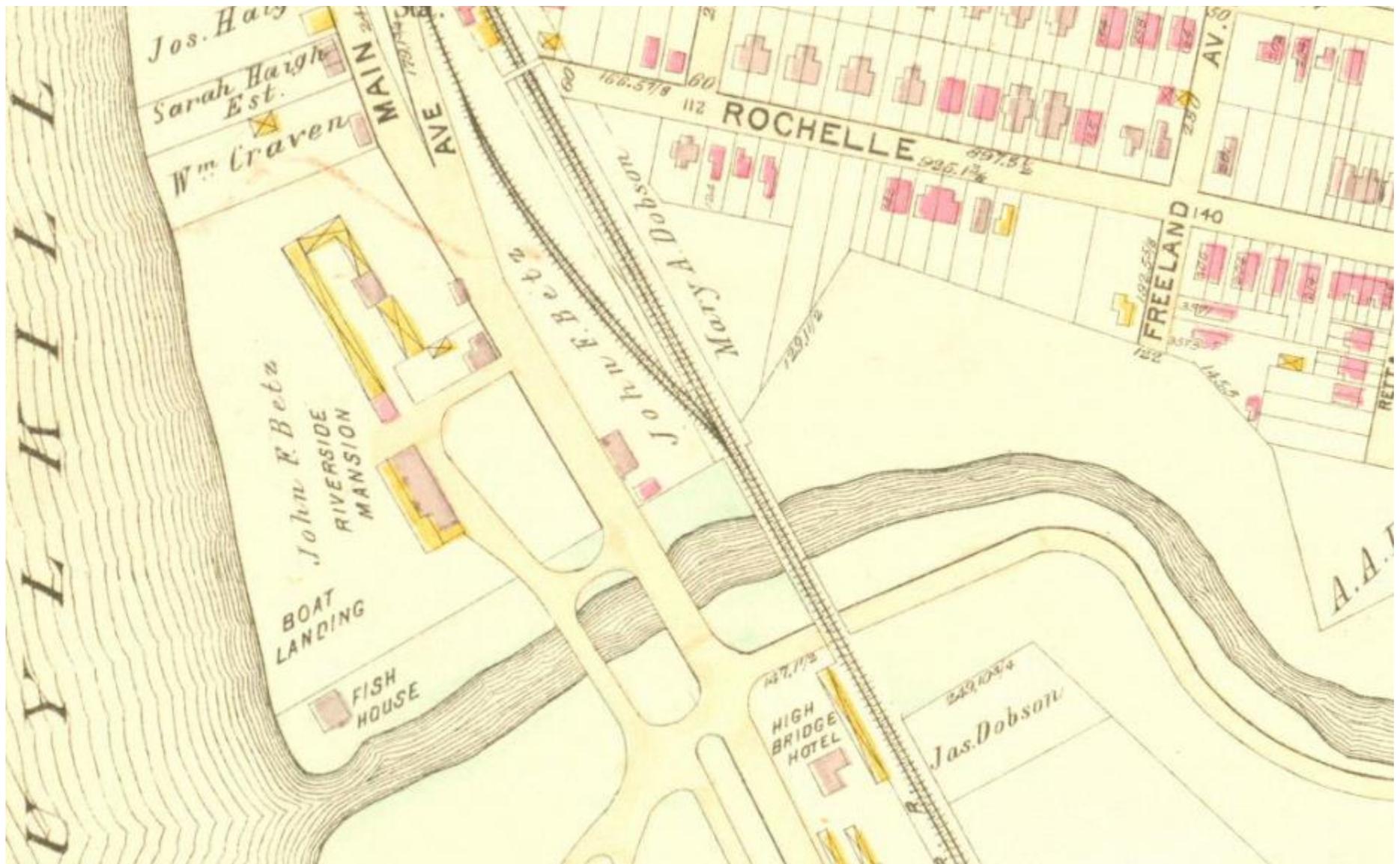
1895 Phila. Atlas <https://www.philageohistory.org/tiles/viewer/?SelectedLayers=Overlay,SMD1860>

Fish House – Search on word “Shad” at this site for fishing background:

<http://freepages.rootsweb.com/~dynamo53/genealogy/Manayunk/EarlyHistory/EarlyHistManayunk.html>



Same as prior map with a little different detail; still The Robeson's Rolling Mill is a "Fish House."



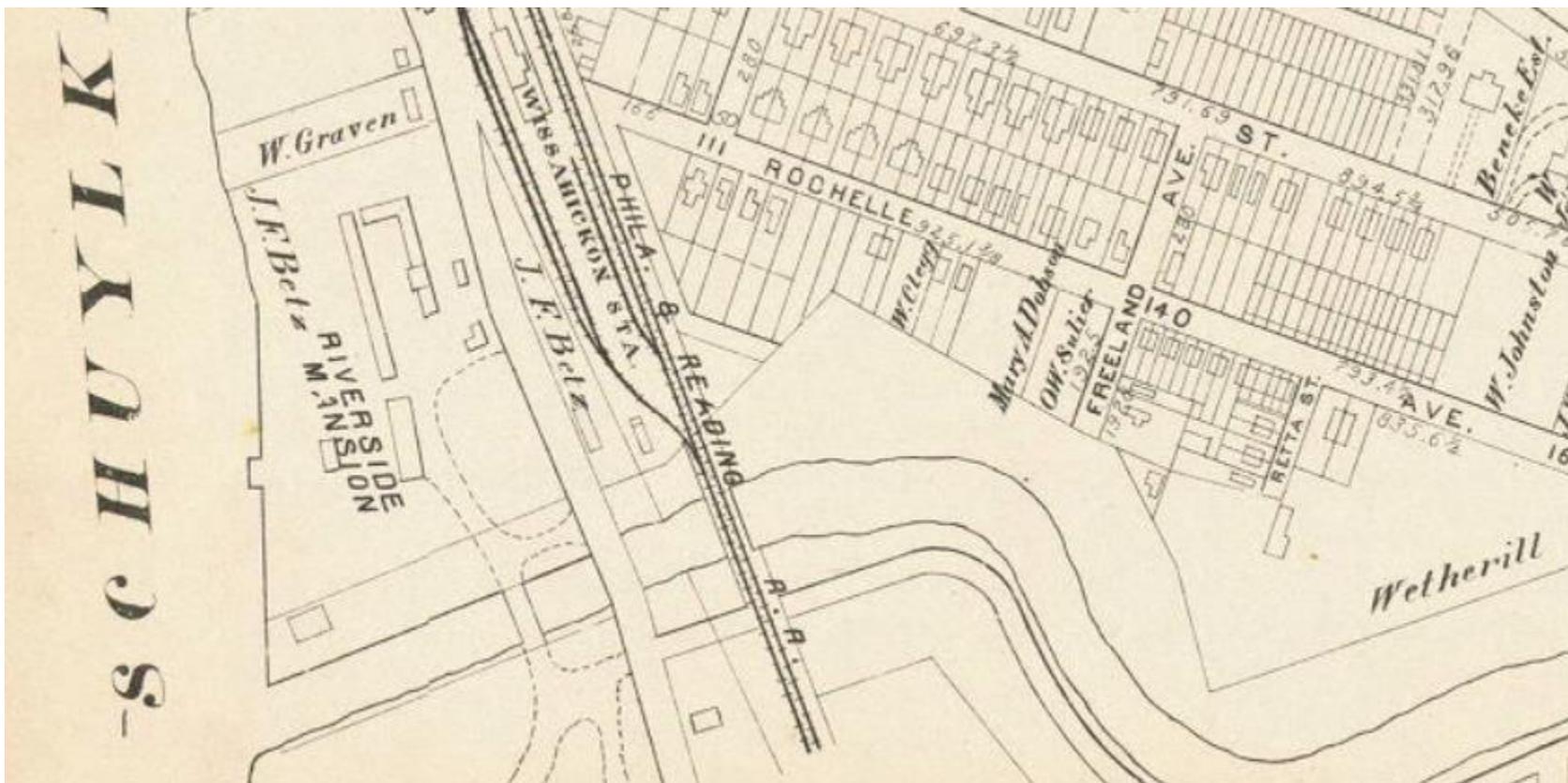
1895 Wissahickon Valley Showing Adjacent Properties, 1895 <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/AS-1>

A building appears to be in Park land and close to location of The Robeson's Rolling Mill; seems Mill located too far north and has a dock.

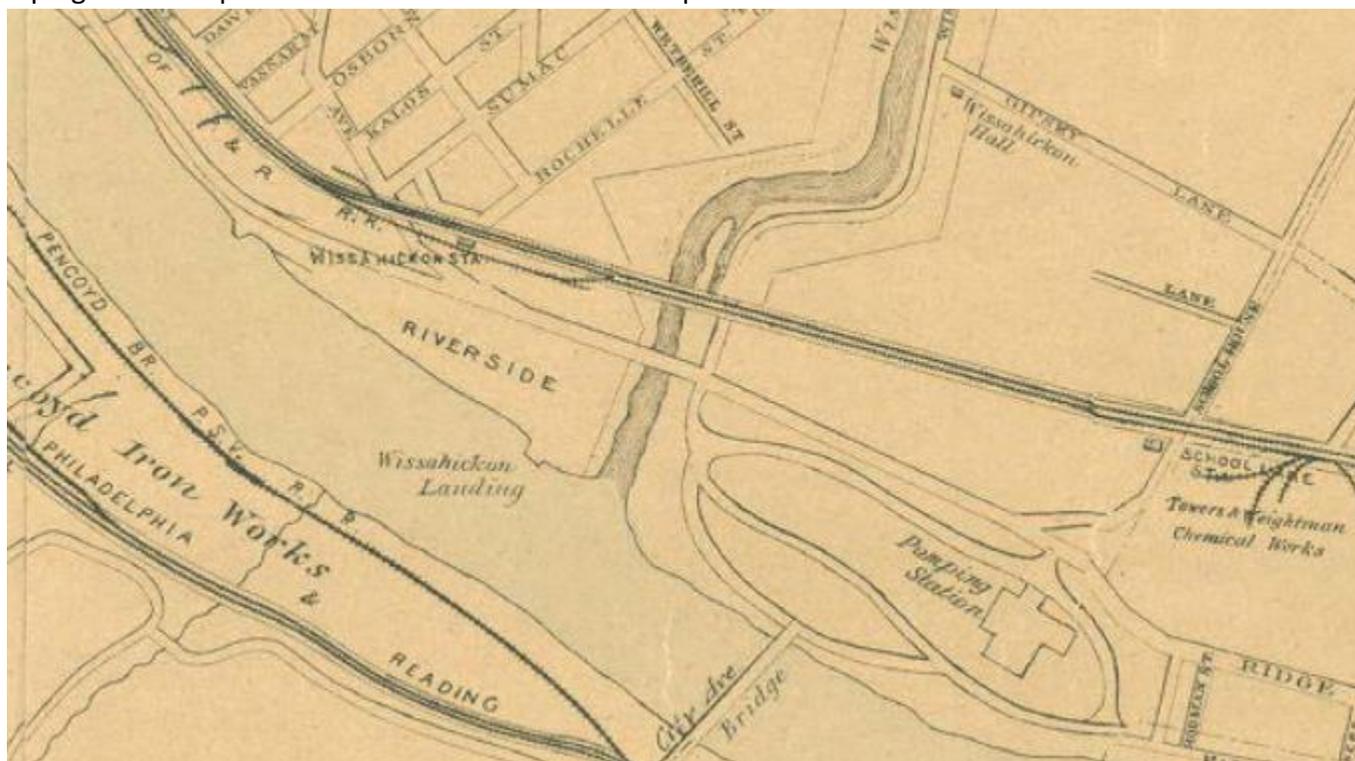


1895 Baist's Property Atlas of the City and County of Philadelphia, Penna. <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/BST1885.Phila.041.Plan39>

Much the same as a prior map.

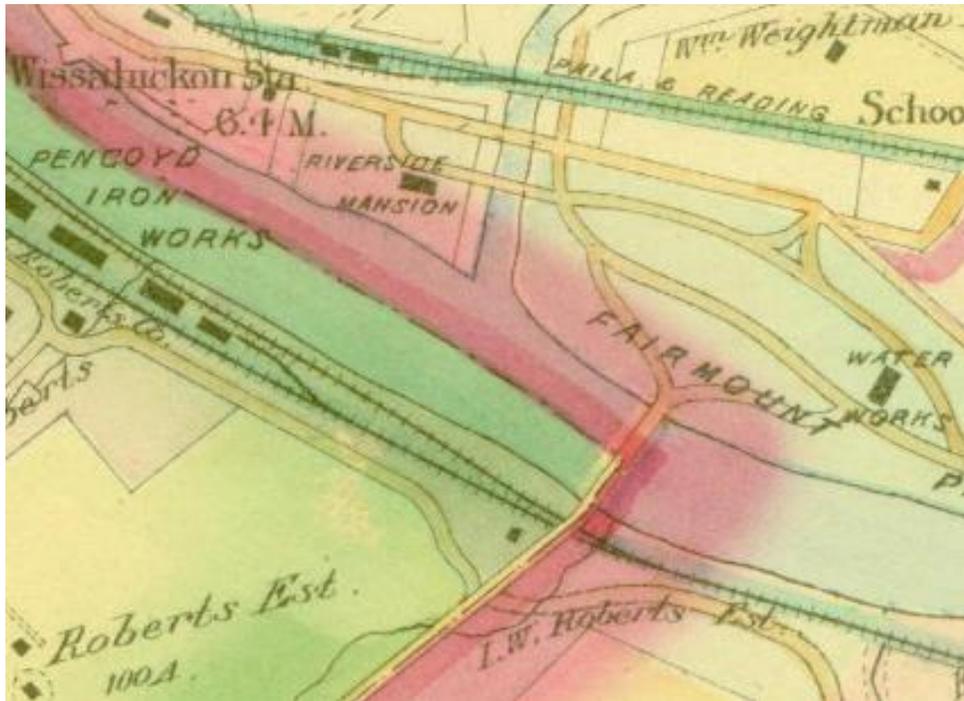


1895 The City of Philadelphia from Actual Surveys and Official Records in the Department of Surveys and corrected by the District Surveyors
CREATOR: J. L. Smith <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/001-MP-005>
Similar to earlier maps but note the “Wissahickon Landing” is not in Park and no building on The Robeson’s Rolling Mill location, and Riverside Mansion missing. Pumping Station replaced small reservoir on earlier map.



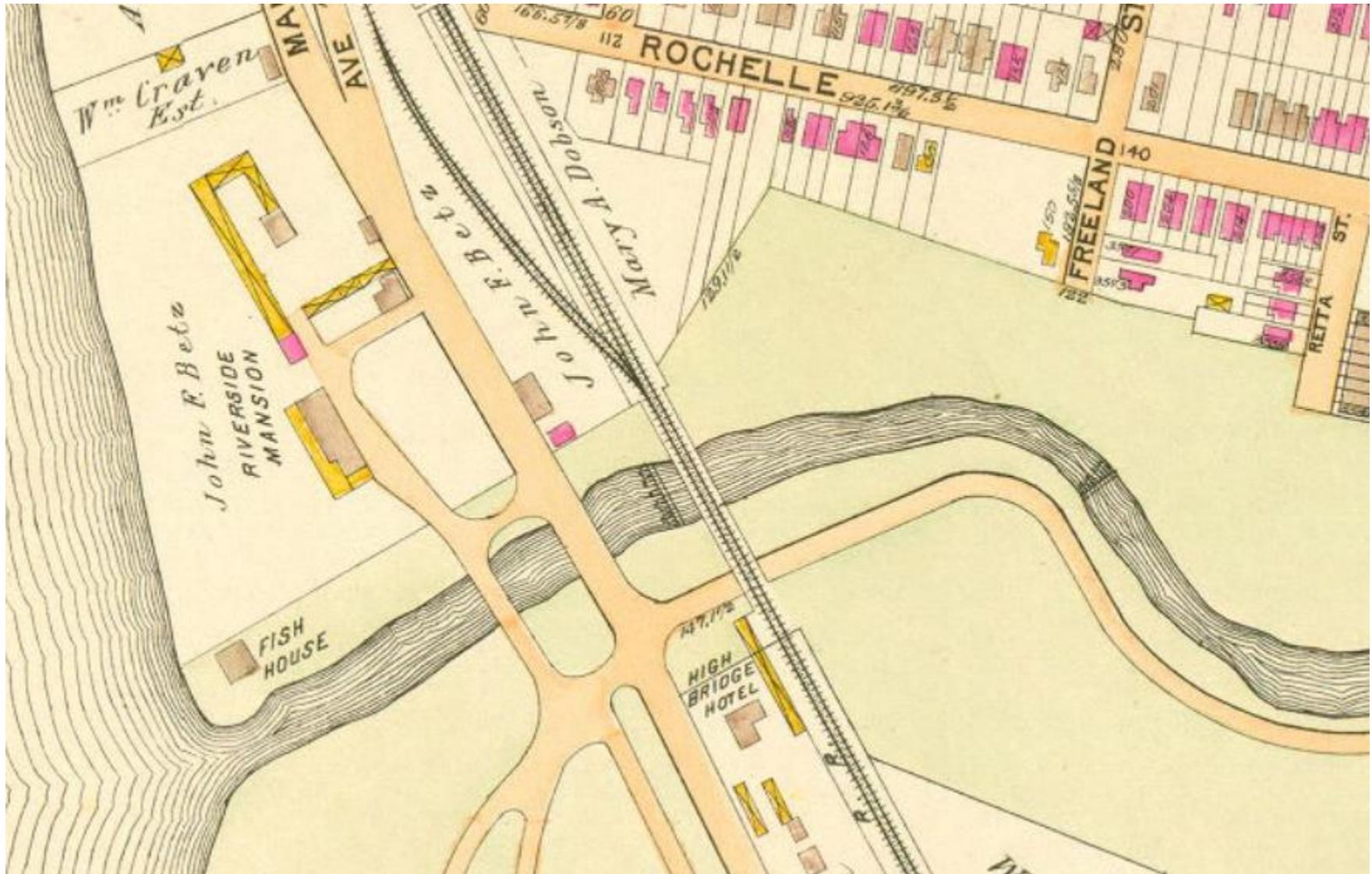
1897 Baist's Map Showing the Development of the City and Suburbs of Philadelphia (left) https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/BST1897.Phila_Suburbs.007.Plate7

1897 Bushnell's Complete Map of Fairmount Park Philadelphia on right, [Bushnell's Complete Map of Fairmount Park Philadelphia, 1897, Map - Free Library](#)



1901 Atlas of the City of Philadelphia, Complete in One Volume <https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/BRM1901.Phila.036.Plate32>

Much the same as an earlier map with "Fish House" on The Robeson's Rolling Mill location.



1902 March 1

Flood ranks as 3rd highest crest in the Schuylkill River: A series of snowstorms followed by heavy rains caused flooding on the Lehigh and Delaware Rivers as well as the most destructive flood on the Susquehanna in the Wyoming Valley since 1865. (Pre-Ida list floods: [Philadelphia.pdf \(weather.gov\)](#)). Article on next page describes how this was the flood that caused the Colony on the Schuylkill to give up their lease on the "Fish House."



THE DESERTED OLD FISH HOUSE



Club's Request to Occupy One Time Home of State in Schuylkill Abandoned, and the Park Commission Considers Demolition of Building

An old Park landmark the one-time iron mill at Riverside, which lately has been the Schuylkill club house of the "State in Schuylkill"—will probably be demolished. About a year ago it was abandoned by the Fishhouse Club¹⁰⁰, as the "State in Schuylkill" is colloquially known, as it had been rendered uninhabitable by the floods from the Wissahickon.

Recently a newly-formed, unnamed social club, of which Worrell Wagner, a son of John Wagner, is the prime mover, asked permission of the Park Commission to make the old mill its headquarters. The Commission, however, regards the structure as dangerous for habitation, susceptible as it is to floods, which often reach the second story and compel the housekeeper to make his exits and entrances by means of a boat, and have about decided to refuse the new club's request.

The matter, however, has not been definitely decided upon, pending an investigation on the part of the Commission's chief engineer and the Committee on Superintendence and Police.

The mill was built some years previous to the American Revolution and was the first nail mill located in the country. It was operated with a wheel swung under the side of the structure, turned by the waters of the Wissahickon carried through a mill race, which emptied into the Schuylkill.

After the Revolution, newer and larger mills, with improved machinery, put the old place out of business, and it was abandoned for its original purpose and used as a dwelling.

Was Purchased by City

About 1860¹⁰¹ it was purchased by the city and added to

the Park Property to prevent the contamination of the water by sewerage. It was then used as a stable for Park guard horses, until the "State in Schuylkill," in April, 1876, secured its possession for their club house, at a nominal rental¹⁰². It then became the scene of many of the festivities which have made this social fishing organization famous. They fitted up the old structure in an attractive way inside, allowing its outward seeming to remain as it had stood for a century.

It was the habit of the club to give fish dinners on the lawn, a lawn redeemed from the old mill race by filling it to a level with the banks and fencing it in from the Riverside property. Here, out in the open air, in an iron oven the rock fish and perch were boiled and panned after the method of the ancestors of this old club.

The "State in Schuylkill" marks its birth—1732. It was organized by a coterie of well-known citizens of Philadelphia, who enjoyed cooking the fish taken with their own lines. Their first home was located on the west bank of the Schuylkill on a spot between the Pennsylvania Railroad and Girard avenue bridges, as they now stand, and the ground was given them by "Baron" William Warren, who exacted a yearly tribute of three sun perch, which the club served him on a huge pewter platter.

Famous for Its Punch

The club house was known as the "Castle." In 1820 the Castle was floated down to Rambo Rock, on the Lower Schuylkill, opposite Bartram's Garden, where it remained until 1888, when it was taken apart and reset up at Eddington, on the Delaware, across the river from Beverly, and is now the rallying ground of the anglers under the sobriquet of "The Fishhouse"—famous for its punch as well as fish stories.

The old mill on the Schuylkill was selected as a handy spot for parties and it was used quite as much as the "Castle,"¹⁰³ until the floods drove fishermen away.

These floods, a member of the {State in Schuylkill} club says, have been due to the narrowing of the channel at that point¹⁰⁴, the remit of encroachments made by the Pencoyd Iron Works, which for years has been dumping slag along the bank. It is thought that it would be impossible to prevent this flooding except at a great expense, and as a result, the Commission has practically decided to tear down the old landmark, take away the fence, and level the ground to conform with the treatment of the bank all along the River Drive.

¹⁰⁰ The Club moved its official Colony Castle and HQ in 1887 to Andalusia, but its lease of the Mill did not expire until 1902.

¹⁰¹ It was a property appropriated for public use by the Act of Assembly, 14 April 1868, but not Deeded over until 1874 for \$10,000.

¹⁰² \$5.00 per document in the Fairmount Park archives.

¹⁰³ In 1887, the Colony's 'real' Castle was in Eddington; it moved to Andalusia in 1944. The March 1902, the flood waters rose two & a half feet into the Mill's main room. The 1902 flood matched 1869 levels in some places per the July 2020 Manayunk Main Street Historic District Flood Guide.

¹⁰⁴ East River Drive entranceway added c. 1891-1893.

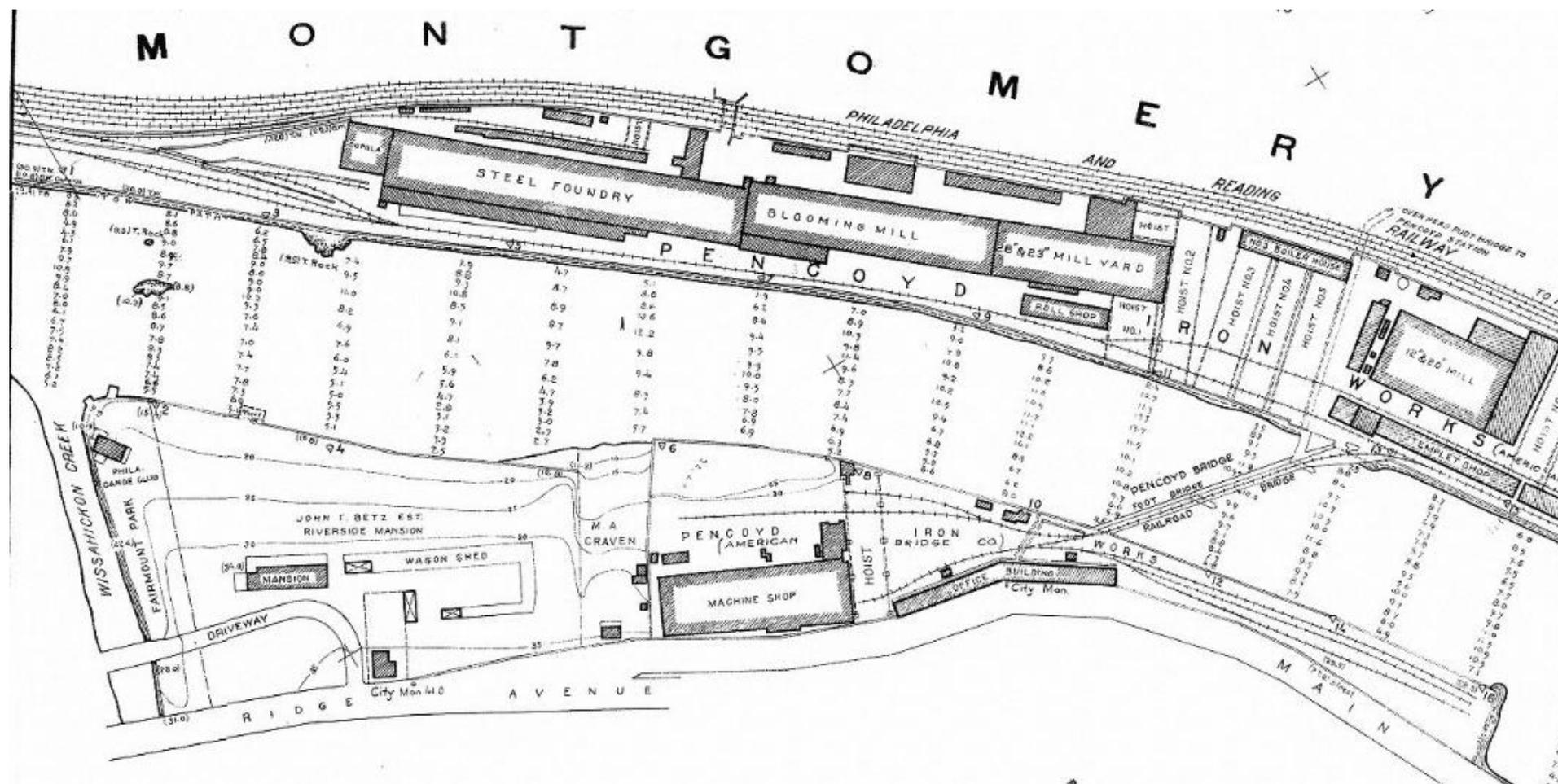
1907 "Birds Eye View of Manayunk, Wissahickon - Roxborough from West Laurel Hill Cemetery," 1907

http://www.phmc.state.pa.us/bah/dam/mg/di/m011_0567/m011_0567_0000_079a_manayunk.jpg

The Robeson's Rolling Mill on the map, now in 1907 and as of 1905 home of the Philadelphia Canoe Club. Note bridge South of Ridge Ave. is no longer there.



1913: Schuylkill River. Wissahickon Creek, Phila., Pa. to Norristown, Pa. Surveyed by J. W. Thompson, Junior Engineer, Aug. to Dec. 1913. L. D. Shuman, Assistant Engineer. In 18 sheets. [Includes Index map (Sheet 14), descriptions of triangulation stations¹⁰⁵ (Sheets 15, 16 and 17) and Freshet Data (Sheet 18) listing all the major floods affecting this section of the river to 1913¹⁰⁶.] https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/RC-R_Schuylkill_01



A good map of the Flat Rock Dam area can be found here: https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/RC-R_Schuylkill_03

¹⁰⁵ See link and MON. 2 top left for tracking monitoring station corner Canoe Club and Betz Estate on the River with elevation https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/RC-R_Schuylkill_15

¹⁰⁶ "... Freshet Data (Sheet 18) listing all the major floods affecting this section of the river to 1913." https://www.philageohistory.org/rdic-images/view-image.cfm/RC-R_Schuylkill_18 Various locations 1850 - 1913. Multiple references/locations for the river Height for 1869 flood, but unclear how to determine its impact on Canoe Club Mill – how high waters flooded the 1st floor.

Glossary of Key Words and Abbreviations in the Deeds and Indentures

The Glossary includes key phrases (shown in quotes) and abbreviations, shown with examples, from the deeds¹⁰⁷ to add context and to track the phrases as property descriptions change and/or are transcribed by different parties over time. Original deeds were analyzed wherever available, but only second-generation copies, the now official record deed transcriptions were available in some cases, the original lost deeds as transcribed by City Officials.

Glossary¹⁰⁸

And / &: Abbreviation in the 1702 Sep 15 A Robeson to J Vanlaer half 200 acres and half 8 acres document  as in  "without Division to them & their heirs"

This explanation is necessary as some early transcriptions misidentified the abbreviation as being "or" as the writer did not see it in context to a preceding and unambiguous phrase's use. The key property description at issue read correctly "One Water Corn Mill & Millns..." but a miss-transcription changed the second "&" to "or" and so read as "Corn or Grist Mills or Millns." An extended discussion of this issue can be found at the end of the Glossary.

Bolting Mill: Process of separating flour from bran or skin of the wheat by using fine mesh cloth serving as a sieve. (Credit to The Mills Archive.) The term is used in the 1720 Will of Andrew Robeson Jr. to describe property he leaves to his son Andrew (III): "...Roxborrow Mill and Bolting Mill and Team..."

Corn Mill: The Chester Mill (1683), the Townsend/Roberts Mill (1685) and the mill built by Tittery and Townsend before 1690 were all originally referred to as "Corn Mills" as that was the first predominate crop in the Colony. Corn mill products are not as finely milled as wheat and other grains.

Corn vs. Grist: Corn was the predominant crop in the early years of the Colonial and wheat and other grains came later hence the first several mills in Pennsylvania are "corn mills."

Grist Mill: One in which the grain is crushed but not finely ground to flour (older term for a flour mill) per the Mills Archive. A "Flour Mill" produces a finely ground product meant for human consumption. Grist can be "meal" for animal consumption. The Wissahickon Mill evolved from being a 'grist mill' c. 1702 to a Bolting/Flour mill by 1720.

Millns: A new American word or abbreviation as not recognized in Britain. Definition could be a plural form of "millstones" as used in context of multiple stones in a mill or it could be referencing a mill with multiple waterwheels as it refers to a mill that is known to have contained three waterwheels "under the same roof" as substantiated in documents related to the Robeson suit vs the Schuylkill Navigation Company..

Moiety: Refers to half of something. The term was generally used to refer to a one-half interest in real estate but is rarely used today. It is derived from an old French word "moitié," meaning half.

Rolling Mill: A mill used to take pre=process iron and compress it into more easily processed, thinner iron that blacksmiths or water wheel driven tilt hammers could make into nails or carriage wheel or barrel hoops.

Roller Mill: A process that replace millstones for grinding wheat into flour (like process, but unrelated to rolling iron).

Water Corn Mill: In early colonial times, there were corn mills powered by horses as opposed to water.

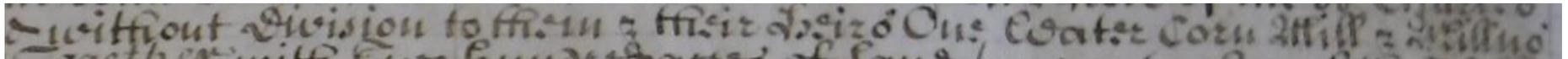
¹⁰⁷ The term deeds can include documents such as the 1702 "Writ of Partition" and leases of property and the Glossary includes some words used in 'Last Wills and Testaments.'

¹⁰⁸ Credit to and please see also the [Glossary – The Mills Archive](#)

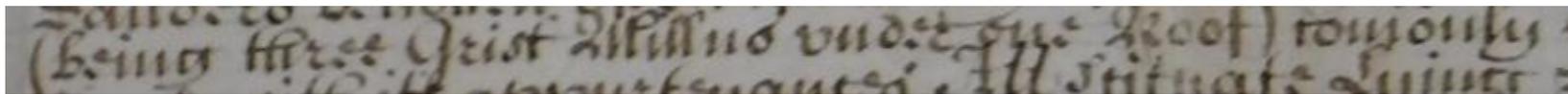
Glossary Continued: This section of the Glossary reviews key indentures and deeds to analyze the word “**Millns**” in the deeds, perhaps used as an abbreviation,¹⁰⁹ **and** analyze two other critical words and their abbreviations: and / “**&**” versus the word “**or.**”

The **& vs. or** analysis was completed as part of the effort to determine the number of mills being discussed: singular or plural. The distinction is related to separating the descriptions of the mill(s) on a.) the west side of the Wissahickon Creek versus b.) the Mill on the east side of the Creek. The one mill on the east side is referred to in the plural as it had multiple millstones, and later multiple waterwheels under the same roof (enclosed, not external wheels).

1702 Sep 15 A Robeson to J Vanlaer half 200 acres and half 8 acres; 4th line down the right side of Indenture “Without Division to them **or** heirs One Water Corn Mill & Millns”:

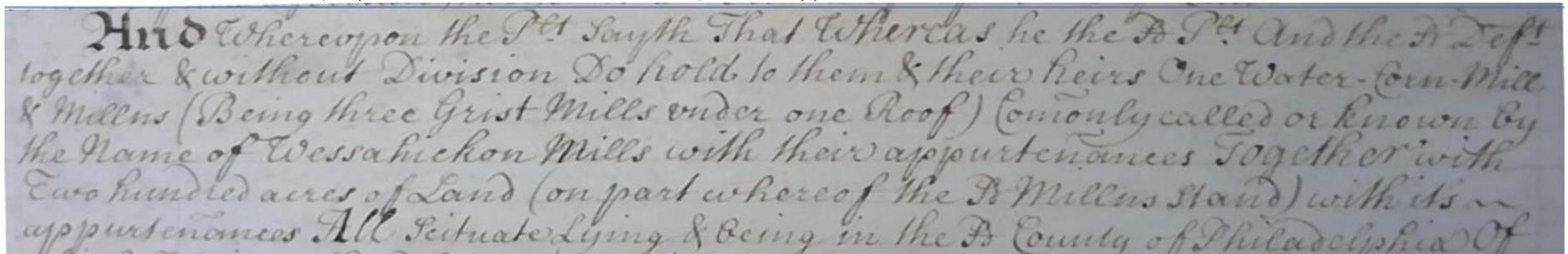


5th line goes on “(being three Grist Millns under one roof) commonly called Wissahickon Mills:



1702 Dec 3 John Van Lear petition v William Sanders TRANSCRIPTION – **Note** the dashes between the words water-corn-mill that combine it as a single entity.

And whereupon the Plaintiff sayeth that, whereas he the said Plaintiff and the Defendant together and without division do hold to them and their heirs, One Water-Corn-Mill & Millns (**Being 3 Grist Mills under one Roof**) Commonly called or known by the name Wissahickon Mills with their appurtenances Together with two hundred acres of land (on part whereof the Said Millns stand) with its appurtenances.

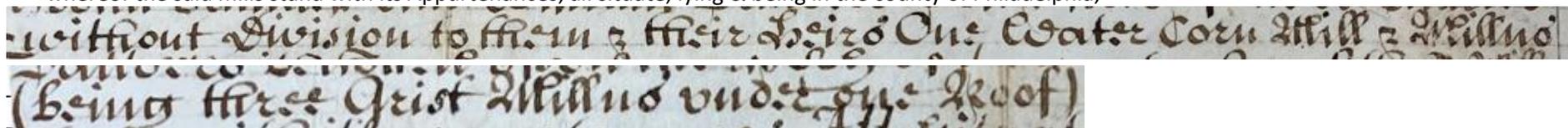


¹⁰⁹ An Archivist, Nathanael Hodge, at The Mills Archive Trust in the UK (www.millsarchive.org) reviewed the deed and reported that “Millns” is not a known word in the Mills Archives Glossary nor a known abbreviation. Seems to be a new ‘US’ invention to save on paper/writing. The document is on paper 16+ inches wide by 30 long.

Sample Deed: 1703 Oct 5 John Vanlaer and Sarah Sanders to Andrew Robeson (Jr.)

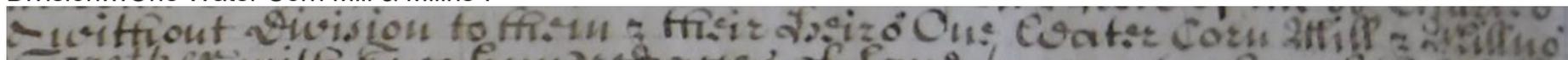
Part in this sample is same as 1st sample as regards to “(being three Grist Millns under one roof).” Original samples 2 and 3 said “Mills under one roof.”

Whereas the said John Vanlaer¹¹⁰ and William Sanders, son and Heir of the said Charles Sanders begotten upon the body of the Sarah Sanders, became lawfully seized as Tenants in Common and did hold together and without division to them and their heirs, **One Water Corn Mill & Millns (being three Grist Millns under one roof)** commonly called or known by the name Wissahickon Mills, with their appurtenances¹¹¹, Together with 200 acres of land on part whereof the said mills stand with its Appurtenances, all situate, lying & being in the county of Philadelphia,



the word/abbreviation in the earliest deed  is "and"/"&" because the same abbreviation  is in the wording just seven words prior in the phrase "Without Division to them & their heirs..." The abbreviation can be seen occurring twice in the line below.

1702 Sep 15 Andrew Robeson to John Vanlaer half 200 acres and half 8 acres; 4th line down right side of Indenture “Without Division...One Water Corn Mill & Millns”:



Old transcription in deeds book also has as “&”

[Deeds \(Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania\), 1683-1886 ; index to deeds, 1683-1916; ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSFB-T9G7-R?cat=227024 \(familysearch.org\)](https://familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSFB-T9G7-R?cat=227024)

1748 Sample.

1748 Nov 4 Zachariah Whitpaine to Magdalen Robeson

Line 5: “...Corn or Grist Mills or Millns (*sic*) (now being two grist mills with two pairs of Stones under one Roof) sometimes called or known by the name Wissahickon Mills and now called Roxborough Mills”



John Vanlaer purchased half land and rights of 200 acres from Samuel Robeson, son & Executor of Andrew Robeson Sr., in 1702.

Stone's under one Roof

Line 6:

NEW SAMPLE #5 - 1752 May 22 Magdalen Robeson sale to Henry Shellenberg half 96 acres and half 8 acres & mills. Old transcript, not original writing.
“in a Certain Water Corn or Grist Mill or Mills (now being two Grist Mills with two pair of stones under one roof)”

Full equal and undivided Moiety or half part of and in a Certain
Water Corn or Grist Mill or Mills (now being two Grist Mills
with two pair of Stones under one Roof) sometimes call'd or known

Original writing – key part that is available (need to rephotograph prior phrase) – same as 1748

(now being two Grist Mills with two pair of Stones under one Roof)

BIBLIOGRAPHY draft – *By Author or Topic (some internet sites lack an author). Does not include stand-alone Maps, map collections, or Picture links in the footnotes, nor does the below include the links to the LDS Family Search/Ancestry Library notes or Ancestry.com. LDS links may require you to have first registered – it is free: www.familysearch.org*

A History of the Indian Villages and Place Names in Pennsylvania

https://books.google.com/books?id=5lyLDwAAQBAJ&pg=PT551&lpg=PT551&dq=%221677%22+wissahickon+%22john+mattson%22&source=bl&ots=DlaDLjvln7&sig=ACfU3U0tYy_G3IU-9Rtq9hmrHJv8KWlaMw&hl=en&sa=X&ved=2ahUKewipooTXou71AhW5kIkEHaQQBwsQ6AF6BAGCEAM#v=onepage&q=%221677%22%20wissahickon%20%22john%20mattson%22&f=false

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https://www.montcopa.org/DocumentCenter/View/3259/NatAreaInv2007_Chap10?bidId=

Update Log – Notes recapping major updates.

Significant Updates made after PHMC was completed 16 Feb 2023. New document dates and key phrases are in bold and the updates are in chronological order in the first group.

1. **Found and transcribed 19 June 1686 lease** of fifty & half acre of land by R. Turner to J. Tittery and **established that all land leased for improvements and the subsequent building of corn mill was on the west side of the Wissahickon Creek (side of Creek where the Robeson Mill stands)**. **Import:** Prior historians ¹¹²assumed that the 50.5 acres of leased land spanned the both sides of the Creek and land and the early mills were built on both sides of the Wissahickon. [1686 Fifty and one half Acres Mapped.pdf \(philacano.org\)](#)
2. **Transcribed key sections**, the basic terms and boundaries and buildings, of **8 Nov. 1690 Indenture** that updated the 1686 lease from R. Turner, J. Tittery & R. Townsend and convey to Andrew Robeson, Sr. & Charles Sanders half ownership in the fifty & half acre, 101-year lease. **Import:** The indenture repeated the boundaries of the 1686 lease pre-improvements, with all land being on the west side of the Wissahickon Creek, and states that it includes rights to profits from “...**tilled land, improvements houses, Saw & Corn mills... (on the west side of the Creek)**”¹¹³ [1690 Nov 8 J Tittery and R Townsend to A Robeson Word to Pdf.pdf \(philacano.org\)](#)
3. **Transcribed key sections**, the basic terms and boundaries and buildings, of **4 April 1691 Indenture** that updated the 50.5 acre lease retrospectively to 25 March 1689 to bring John Tyzache into a ‘Copartnership’ with Josuha Tittery and Richard Townsend. **Import:** The indenture repeats the boundaries of the 1686 lease, the 1690 addendum with all land being on the west side of the Wissahickon Creek, and on line 14 states Tyzache owns an “...undivided Sixth part of all the tilled land improvements Houses **Saw & Corn Mills** & all the Iron work timber works, Mill Stones, tooles & Implements now belonging...” [1691 Apr 4 Tittery and Townsend Lease to Tyzache.pdf \(philacano.org\)](#)
4. **Extended the transcription of 11 July 1691 Deed**¹¹⁴ wherein R Turner sells all 500 acres of land to Robeson & Sanders and Tittery, Townsend and Tyzache convey their ownerships in the lease to Robeson & Sanders. **Import:** The Deed reviews all the three prior transactions and confirms that the “Saw and Corn Mills” were built on the leased land (west side of the Wissahickon Creek) and identifies the likely mason deserving credit for working with Townsend as “...William Preston of the same county, Mason...” [11 July 1691 Deed.pdf \(philacano.org\)](#)
5. **Extended the transcription of 3 Dec 1702 Pleas** – Writ of Partition John Van Lear petition v William Sanders. **Import:** The Writ of Partition confirms the existence of the “**One Water-Corn-Mill**” and goes on to say there now exists a by this date a second mill, described in the plural sense “& Millins (Being 3 gristmills under one Roof)...” [1702 Sep 15 A Robeson to J Vanlaer half 200 acres and half 8 acres.pdf \(philacano.org\)](#)
6. **1752 Aug 22 Transcribed:** Deed Rudman Robeson to Henry Schellenberg - The wording is the same as in early part of the deed as Magdalen's deed, but a later section has in it "Rolling" descriptor, phrased as "Stables, Millhouses, **Rolling Mills**, Buildings,..." [Deeds \(Philadelphia County, Pennsylvania\), 1683-1886 ; index to deeds, 1683-1916; ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSFB-YQ8X-L?i=228&cat=227024 \(familysearch.org\)](#)
7. **1755 Jun 22 Transcribed:** Deed Henry Shellenberg to John Vanderen - as above 22 Aug 1752 deed, the but a later section adds the "Rolling" descriptor, phrased as "Stables, Millhouses, **Rolling Mills**, Buildings,..." [1755 Shellenberg to John Vanderan.pdf \(philacano.org\)](#)
8. **1789:** James Ash Sheriff sale references the existence of a Corn mill as well as the Grist mill, with the mills being on opposite sides of the Wissahickon Creek. [1789 Dec 8 James Ash Sheriff to Peter and Jonathon Robeson.pdf \(philacano.org\)](#)

¹¹² It is assumed that no Prior historians had found this document or had not transcribed and mapped the section which states the boundaries of the lease, which was a time-consuming task that was not expected to bear new information.

¹¹³ See **sixteenth line** on Indenture. Consent of R. Townsend “Millwright” part of agreements as he and Joshua Tittery had entered a partnership agreement after 1686.

¹¹⁴ Recorded 8 July 1763.

9. **1790:** James Ash 'Sheriff Deed' again notes the existence of a Corn mill as well as the Grist mill, with the mills being on opposite sides of the Wissahickon Creek. . [1790 Mar 6 James Ash Esq Sheriff Vanderen estate Deed to Peter and Jonathon Robeson.pdf \(philacano.org\)](#)
10. **1820 US Census** of Manufactures: [John Moore Renting the Rolling and Slitting Mill and Nail Factory 1820 Census.pdf \(philacano.org\)](#)
11. **1822 Frederick Graff drawing** and documents related to suit and Fairmount Dam raising the River water level upstream, with geographic diagrams and drawing of the Rolling Mill Waterwheel. [Philadelphia Architects and Buildings 1822 \(philadelphiabuildings.org\)](#)
12. **1845** 2nd set of Frederick Graff drawing and related 2nd suit for loss water power after the Fairmount Dam was rebuilt. [Philadelphia Architects & Buildings 1845 \(philadelphiabuildings.org\)](#)

Endnotes

– Some, such as the recap of ownership, are still works-in-progress.

Three pages of the details of the land/mill ownership start on the next page.

Robeson Rolling Mill:

Ownership of the land around the Robeson Mill and which now lies on about One Acre in the Park.

[ⁱ Three pages of the details of the land/mill ownership start on the next page.](#)

[Robeson Rolling Mill:](#)

[Ownership of the land around the Robeson Mill and which now lies on about One Acre in the Park.](#)

Robeson Rolling Mill

Ownership of what is now One Acre in the Park

*Italics = land split-off, **not** the 8-acre Mill land (kept for references to 'Mills').*

Start Date Grantee - Buyer / Warrantee - Patentee	End Year / Record Yr.	Grantee or New Owner at the date - Notes & Sources (e.g. Leasee) or Will	Deed - Purchase book from a source or clear Deed Indices or "Will"	Acres Jointly owned if 2+ People
1681	1681	William Penn	Crown to Penn Grant 1681 - Treaty Indians 1682	-
1682	1683	William Penn "Penn's Treaty with the Indians at Shackamaxon"	A 8 242	-
1683 Jan 20	1686	Robert Turner	Warrant 20 Jan 1683 and purchase 20 Jan 1683. Recorded 19 Apr 1684 Tho. Holme Named Surveyor General, By the Shoemark Parke (No. 252) Patented 29 May 1684; Patent #26; A 1 pg. 43- 46 Recorded 1684 Jun 24;	500
1686 Jan 29	1690	Joshua Tittery and Richard Townsend Partnership	The date is given in 1690 Nov 8 indenture - see below. Recorded 8 July <u>1763</u> . And Date/partnership is noted in 1691 Jul 19 Indenture.	50.5 Acre Lease All on the West side of the Creek!
1686 Jun 19	1691	Joshua Tittery (101 yr. lease)	Abstract: Ck H 4 pg. 549 and H 10 pg. 12 (Rent 25 shillings and three pence) Townsend Not referenced	50.5 Lease All on the West side of the Creek!
1689 Mar 25	1691	Richard Townsend, J Tittery Partnership includes John Tyzache	"Partnership" as referenced/documented in the Indenture date 4 Apr 1691	
1690 Nov 8	1691	Andrew Robeson Sr. & Charles Saunders	Per Brief of Title 1878 - 1/2 rights to lease 50 1/2 acres "Recited" includes "Saw and Corn Mills"	Half of 50.5 Lease
1691 Apr 4 (as of 1689)	1691	John Tyzache formally added to "Tripartite Indentures" as of 1869	Book F Vol 6 page 410 Saw and Corn Mills also City Archives 6 pg. 114	50.5 Lease
1691 Jul 11	1694	Andrew Robeson Sr. & Charles Saunders	Andrew Grantee, Grantor Chas Sanders Deed Book H-16 Pg. 417; " Dobson " Brief of Title says Recorded <u>recorded May 23, 1734</u> (City Archives found in the Dobson files)	500 includes payment for lease of 50.5 acresland
1692 Jul 28	1694	Andrew Robeson Sr. & Charles Saunders	Deed that formally finalized the above for J. Tyzache's 1/6th ownership in the land lease found in City Archive	50.5 Lease
1694	1695	Elizabeth Robeson & Charles Saunders	Andrew Robeson Sr. died 1694 and Eliz died 1695. son Samuel is Executor (he died 1699)	500
1696	1696	<i>Benj. & Jos. Morgan</i>	<i>The 500 acre 'Robeson/Sanders' estate now down to 200 acres F vol. 2 page 404</i>	<i>300 acres</i>
1695	1699	Samuel Robeson and Charles Saunders	Samuel inherits half ownership on death of his Mother, Elizabeth. Will Book B pg 341.	200
1699 July 21	1699	Samuel Robeson and Sarah Saunders on behalf of son William	Will	
1699 Sept. 21	1702	Estate of Samuel Robeson (son Andrew Sr. & Eliz.: Andrew Robeson Jr. as one of three Executors) & Sarah Saunders/Wm Sanders	Will Book B, Page 341 Proofed 2/25/1703-1704 to Samuel - Need check as A. Robeson Sr. died 1699 and Estate sold his portion of the property to nephew A. Robeson Jr.	200

Robeson Rolling Mill

Ownership of what is now One Acre in the Park

*Italics = land split-off, **not** the 8-acre Mill land (kept for references to 'Mills').*

<u>Start Date</u> Grantee - Buyer / Warrantee - Patentee	<u>End Year /</u> <u>Record Yr.</u>	Grantee or New Owner at the date - Notes & Sources (e.g. Leasee) or Will	Deed - Purchase book from a source or clear Deed Indices or "Will"	Acres Jointly owned if 2+ People
1702 Sept. 15	1703 Oct. 5	John Van Laer ("of Philadelphia Baker") & Sarah Sanders/Wm Sanders	Found in City Archives Fairmont Park Collection Oversized 146.9 Dobson File	half ownership 200 acres
1702 Dec 3	1703 Oct. 5	John Vanlaer 96 acres Sarah Sanders for Wm Sanders 96 acres and 8 acres jointly owned	Writ of Partition - Partition confirmed by the Court 4 March 1703" (96 acres v. 88 acres and 1/2 share 8 acres.)	96 being ~half 200 (excluding 8 acres) + 1/2 ownership 8 acres
1703 Oct. 5	1720	Andrew Robeson Jr.: Granted 96 acres and half ownership of the 8 acres (A. Robeson Jr. died 19 Feb. 1720 Douglasville Pa.' wife Mary Spencer (or Helm) died in 1716)	Book G Vol 11 page 604 CK Book G Vol. 58 pg 604 and look for "plan ...of "Estover Land"" Have an original paper 30+ Inches wide, Recorded on 12 Jan 1749/50; have also old 2nd copy transcribed and now 3rd copy transcribed in Word .doc. Need the ' plan of estover land '	96 being half 200 (excluding 8 acres) + 1/2 ownership 8 acres
1720	1740	Andrew Robeson III (b. 1686, d. 1740), m. Gertrude Madalena Rudman	(recheck: A - No 6 6 Jul 1724)	96 being half 200 (ex the 8 acres) + 1/2 ownership 8 acres
1733 Sep 11	1748	Zachariah Whitpain (Nephew of Wm Sanders) son of Charles & Sarah Whitpain Zachariah	Wm. Sanders: Will Book E Page 275 - entry # 354 Proved April 29th 1734 No deed in Deed Books	88 acres (west side of the Creek) + half of the 8 acres
1740	1748	Eiizabeth Robeson (1/3)	(See below Ridiman get two thirds as brother died before father and by customer surviving male gets brothers' share)	
1740	1752	Rudeman/Rudiman Robeson and Elizabeth are named as the "only son and dau. of Andrew Robeson (3rd), miller, of Roxborough." 1686-1740.	H 15 289 - assume A. Robeson 3rd as Grantor as of death 1740	96 acres east side of the Creek + <u>1/2 ownership 8 acres</u>
1748 Nov 24	1760/1760	Rudeman Robeson	Need to find Patent; 1762 sold to Vanderen. See reference in 1752 Aog 22 deed	96 East Side + <u>1/3 interest of 8 acres</u>
1748 Sep 22	1752	Magdalen Robeson	JTO No. 30 page 328 Recorded April 1807	"undivided moiety or <i>half part</i> " of 8 acres
1752 May 22	1755	Henry Shellenberg or Heinrich Schellenberger (later Widow Dorothy at sale 1755)	H vol 2 page 228 <i>H 3 442 R Robeson endorsed Magdalen</i> <i>H 3 444 M. Robeson OK</i>	"undivided moiety or half part" of 8 acres
1752 Aug 22	1755	Henry Shellenberg (later Widow Dorothy at sale 1755 (referenced 6 acres s/b the 8 acres below)	H vol 3 page 442 <i>H 3 442 R Robeson endorsed Magdalen</i> <i>H 3 444 M. Robeson OK</i>	96 Acres East Side + half interest of 8 acres
1753 Dec 16	1760	<i>Weckhard Levering</i>	H vol 8 pg 13 <i>(Ref F v6 p14 dead end)</i>	<i>53 West side of Creek Does NOT incl half of 8 acres - see sale below</i>

Robeson Rolling Mill

Ownership of what is now One Acre in the Park

Italics = land split-off, not the 8-acre Mill land (kept for references to 'Mills').

Start Date Grantee - Buyer / Warrantee - Patentee	End Year / Record Yr.	Grantee or New Owner at the date - Notes & Sources (e.g. Leasee) or Will	Deed - Purchase book from a source or clear Deed Indices or "Will"	Acres Jointly owned if 2+ People
1755 Jun 8	1789	John Vanderen (d. 1785 and Mill left to sons Charles & Joseph with four-sixth value to other four children)	Book I vol. 12, pg. 418 Recheck/reread	"All the said Mills and 8 acres and the said 96 acres more or less"
<i>1760 May 8</i>		<i>John Vanderin ("in" in Deed, generally spelled Vanderen)</i>	<i>Deed records v. EF 3 1766-1800 pg 177 (Image 92)</i>	<i>25 (Excludes 8 acres)</i>
<i>1760 Dec 22</i>	<i>1789</i>	<i>John Vanderen</i>	<i>Book H vol 14 Page 30</i>	<i>53 (Excludes 8 acres - No ref. except as boundary - see 1755)</i>
<i>1683-1809 Index Dates</i>		<i>John Vanderen</i>	<i>Various Image 69 in index Grantee index to deeds v. Qu 1683-1903 v. R 1863-1872 v. U-V 1683-1903 v. Y-Z 1851-1878</i>	<i>Various ex-8 acres</i>
<i>1760 1769</i>	<i>n/a</i>	<i>Jacob Coleman William Smith</i>	<i>TBD - 53 acre lot now 52 acres - 2nd lot to Wm Smith so 51 acres</i>	<i>~2</i>
<i>1789 Dec 6</i>		<i>Jonathon & Peter Robeson (III) Great-Grandsons of Andrew Robeson Jr.</i>	<i>Execution Docket, Dec 6 1789, No. 1; Sheriff Deed Book 6, page 146 (link to image with note on the right)</i>	<i>38</i>
<i>1790 Mar 6</i>	<i>1799</i>	<i>Jonathon & Peter Robeson (Jon. Died 1799 & Estate / deed transferred to Peter by Sheriff Israel Israel 1802)</i>	<i>Deed Poll Deed Book E. F. No. 3 page 181 (Image 94)</i>	<i>263 acres in 14 contiguous lots Including the 8 acres</i>
<i>1799</i>	<i>1833</i>	<i>Peter Robeson (d. 1833)</i>	<i>See next entry</i>	<i>241</i>
<i>1820</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>Leased per 1820 Census: Dr. John Moore (Peter's brother-in-law)</i>	<i>John & Catherine Robeson Moore briefly owned 1/3 part of the land 1833-1834 on death of P. Robeson)</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>1833</i>	<i>1862 / 1864</i>	<i>Andrew 1/3 & Jonathon Robeson 1/3 (sons of Peter; Andrew d. 1862 & Jon. d. 1859) and John Moore & Katherine Robeson</i>	<i>Bk 53 p. 315, No. 562 J</i>	<i>241</i>
<i>1862 est.</i>	<i>1874 Sep 23</i>	<i>Harvey Bancroft</i>	<i>Sale - Mortgage Books 1 Aug 1870 JAH v 54 p 237 JAH v 57 p 484</i>	<i>10 to 15 est.</i>
<i>1864</i>	<i>1869</i>	<i>John and Joseph Dobson (Large Mill by RR and Not 8 acres)</i>	<i>Land did not include the Canoe Club Mill land on West side of the Creek BUT past deeds at City</i>	<i>8 + est 235</i>
<i>1874 Sep 23</i>	<i>Present</i>	<i>Fairmont Park - Src Deed Historical Index</i>	<i>F.T.W. Book 150 Page 352</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>1874</i>	<i>" "</i>	<i>Source Deed Fairmont Park Purchases</i>	<i>FTW v. 138 p 328</i>	<i>1</i>
<i>1877</i>	<i>1887</i>	<i>The Schuylkill Fishing Co. of the State in Schuylkill - leased & Occupied</i>		<i>1</i>
<i>1887</i>	<i>1902</i>	<i>State in Schuylkill - leased</i>		<i>1</i>
<i>1902</i>	<i>1905</i>	Fairmont Park - not leased		1
<i>May 22 1905</i>	<i>Present</i>	Philadelphia Canoe Club		1

ⁱⁱ The Rittenhouse Paper Mill is perhaps the best-documented Mill in the valley and was built in the same era as the three “Wissahickon Mills.” It seems likely that Macfarlan and his predecessors read the “HISTORY OF PHILADELPHIA. 1609—1884. BY J. THOMAS SCHARF AND THOMPSON WESTCOTT. IN THREE VOLUMES. VOL. III. PHILADELPHIA” published 1884; see [History of Philadelphia, 1609-1884. V. 3 \(familysearch.org\)](https://www.familysearch.org/ark:/61903/3:1:3Q9M-CSK3-3?i=100&cc=1471000) : “The Robesons at that early date built a grist-mill and bolting-house near the Schuylkill, in the old borough of Roxborough, which were known as “Wissahickon Mills.”

The first Paper Mill was destroyed by a spring flood, a ‘freshet’ in 1701, and rebuilt in 1702 on the Monoshone Creek, aka “Paper Mill Run.” The original owner of the land in Roxborough, Robert Turner, was a partner in this Paper Mill venture along with Thomas Tresse (see 1691 Deed – recap follows Year 1691 and in full in Endnotes): <https://freedomshack.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/11/GC-The-Rittenhouse-Paper-Mill-and-Its-Founders.pdf>

‘Rittenhouse Town’ no longer has its mill building on the Monoshone, but the Village stands today as a great tribute to the people and perseverance of all those who built the fifty-plus mills along the Wissahickon.

Two of the three Robeson Mills were taken down at about the same time as the Rittenhouse Mill: “In 1891, the (*Rittenhouse*) mill was taken down by Fairmount Park Commission along with a number of nearby buildings as part of a plan to create parkland for city residents and to eliminate sources of pollution which were making the city’s drinking water (taken from the Schuylkill River) unsafe.” <https://rittenhousetown.org/about/>

The ‘Robeson’s Rolling Mill,’ earlier known as the Roxboro Mill, lacks any attractions or appeal in the context of a village and surrounding buildings. Its exterior is not an architectural beauty. However, what the Mill lacks in beauty and context, it has made up for in terms of luck and sheer perseverance. Luck, the Park did not tear it down as it did 20+ other mills still in existence then. Perseverance is a virtue in that it has survived flooding from freshets and hurricanes over the last two or three hundred years.

At this point, we stand near where Douglas Macfarlan stood seventy years ago: “The exact dates when these mills were built is still uncertain, for all the information attainable is from deeds.” (“The Wissahickon Mills”, Volume 1 of the three-volume set that covered 50 mills in the valley, 1949 by D. Macfarlan.)

It appears that by “exact,” Macfarlan may have meant 1686, 1687, 1689, 1690, or 1691 as the year built could not be determined or could not specify an exact year for each mill. On the key maps Macfarlan drew, the 1691 date is present, and the reader is left to believe all three Mills were built by 1691.

ⁱⁱⁱ **11 July 1691 Deed**

The 1691 Deed covers the both the unexpired term of the 101 year lease of “fifty and a half acres,” and it includes the “Saw and Corn Mills”ⁱⁱⁱ on the western bank of Wissahickon Creekⁱⁱⁱ within the 500 acres owned by Robert Turner.

The partial transcription of this 1691 deed focuses on the sections that speak to the existence of the Mills that Tittery, Townsend, et al., built while they leased the fifty and a half acres land from “...the nineteenth Day of June 1686...” to the date of this deed in 1691.

The deed is a bit complicated as the Landowner, Robert Turner, first leased the 50.5 acres to Joshua Tittery, who then formed partnerships with Richard Townsend and John Tyzache, and the leases are terminated within this deed. Before this date and sale of both the full 500 acres and the unexpired lease, Andrew Robeson Sr. and Charles Sanders purchased a half share of the 50.5 acre lease (8 Nov 1690). So, Andrew Robeson Sr. and Charles Sanders, on this date, bought out the other half of the lease (Tittery, Townsend & Tyzache) and the full 500 acres from Robert Turner.

The roles and/or rights of these four others named in the indenture are yet to be determined: "...Robert Ewer, Thomas Tresse, of the same place, Merchants, and William Preston of the same county, Mason,... with consent of Patrick Robinson..."

Transcription Notes: The full Deed follows the transcription. Some paragraph breaks have been added to ease reading; the original text has very few periods or commas. Otherwise, the original punctuation is followed unless it hinders reading for content: some commas were added in the current writing style, but many words are left Capitalized as in the original. Names are spelled as written in the Deed. Some additions added in italics added to also ease reading; the link to the full Deed is in the Endnotes in the 'History Recap.' Sections in bold address the existence of two or more Mills and their uses given the tools and Millstones: Saw, Corn, and Iron mill works (iron mill works likely for stamping-out nails).

11 July 1691

Deed Robt Turner & al Attorneys for John Tyzack

This indenture made this 11th day of the 5th month July, in the third year of the reign of William and Mary, King and Queen of England, Anno Domi 1691, between Robert Turner of the town and county of Philadelphia in the province of Pennsylvania, with American merchant Joshua Tittery of the said place, Broadglass maker, **with consent of Richard Townsend of the said place, millwright**, and Robert Ewer, Thomas Tresse, of the same place, Merchants, and William Preston of the same county, Mason, attorneys for and in name and behalf & for the Proper use and behalf of John Tysacke of London, in the Kingdom of England, also Broadglass maker, with consent of Patrick Robinson, of the said place, all of the one part and Andrew Robeson and Charles Sanders, both of the same place, Merchants, of the other part.

Witness that whereas William Penn, proprietor and governor of the said province, by his letter Patents, under his hand and seal dated the 24th of 4th month 1684, did give grant and confirm to the said Robert Turner, his heirs and assigns therein mentioned, a certain tract of land in the said county called Shomack [sic] Park.

Beginning at a corner marked (*by a*) Spanish Oak standing by the Skoolkill [sic] River, from hence East North East by Philadelphia Liberties four hundred and seventy perches to a corner marked White Oak, from hence North West and by North by the Germantown one hundred fifty and three perches to a corner marked stake from there southwest five hundred and twenty-five perches to a corner marked Birch standing by the Schuylkill River then down said river on several courses to the first mention Spanish Oak containing Five Hundred acres of Land as the said *recorded* in the office of Rolls and public register at Philadelphia the twenty-ninth of the 5th month 1684 ... more... and whereas the said Robert Turner by his seal indentured under his hand and seal did demise, and to farm, lease to the said Joshua Tittery, and his heirs and assigns, 50 acres and a half of the said 500 acres of land as part and parcel they're of situate (*tbd*) being and bounded in manner they're in mentioned with all its improvements and appurtenances from the nineteenth Day of June 1686, which is the Date of the said Lease for one hundred and one years under the yearly rent therein expressed and payable at the fixed terms therein mentioned during the said term.

As in the same indenture of lease containing several other mutual clauses and covenants therein which are held as fore in expressed more at length in contained.

And whereas the said Joshua Tittery, by an indenture pact between him and the said Richard Townsend, under their hands and seals dated the 29th January 1686, did bargain and agree for them and their heirs and assigns from the day of the date thereof, to the full end and term of the said lease, to be partners in and upon the said fifty and a half acres of

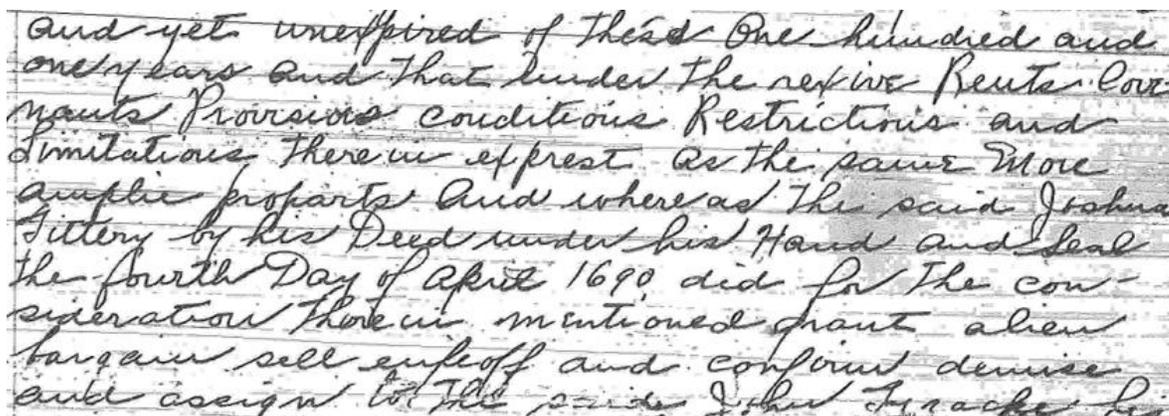
land, and equally to pay the rent and equally to bear the charge of building the mill Mills (*sic phrase "mill Mills" with no comma between the words*) or the improvements that they, or Heirs above written, should agree to make and equally to divide the profits and bear the Leases, as in the same containing some clauses therein more at large is expressed.

And there whereas the said Joshua Tittery and Richard Townsend, by their indentures under their hands and seals have sold and conveyed the said Joshua Tyzacke, his heirs and assigns, for during an unto the full end & term yet to come and unexpired of the said Lease, one full and equal third part (the whole having been in three parts equally divided) of the said fifty and half acres of Land leases and premises, and of all the tilled Land, Houses, Saw and Corn Mills, and all of the Iron and Timber Work Millstones, Tools and improvements then belonging or intended to belong and then provided, or intended to be provided for the mills aforesaid, and all Timber and wood, Sawed and unsawed, under the said John Tyzacke and his payment of the rents, duties and covenants in the said first Lease mentioned,

And whereas it is in the said indentures mentioned that the said Joshua Tittery, Richard Townsend and John Tyzacke have entered and did enter into a joint co-partnership in the said 50 1/2 acres of Land, for during and unto the full end and term yet to come, and yet expired of the said one hundred and one years for the Tillage of Land, Building of houses, building and management of Saw or Corn Mills, or any other Mill or mills, or any other improvements whatsoever upon that said fifty acres and a half of Land premises or aforesaid, or any parts or Parcell [*sic*] thereof in manner in the said Tripartite Indentures of the co-partnership mentioned, and which bear date the twenty fifth day of March 1689 as the said the Indentures tripartite containing therein, diverse other mutual clauses, covenants, articles, Conditions, Privileges, Limitations and Restrictions more fullie [*sic*] and at large is expressed.

And whereas the said Joshua Tittery by his deed under his hand and seal dated the eight day of November 1690, did with the consent of the said Richard Townsend, Witnessed by his being party there to for the consideration therein mentioned, grant alien, bargain, sell, (*tbd*), confirmed demise and assign to the said Andrew Robson and Charles Sanders, their ... heirs and assigns, equally between them, one full just and equal and undivided Moitie^s & half part of said fifty and half acres of Land, leases and premises with the half of all the tilled Land, Improvements, Houses, Saw and Corn Mills, and of all the Iron Work, Timber work Millstones and Tools and improvements, then belonging or intended to belong unto then provided or intended to be provided for the mills aforesaid and all the other Timber and Wood, sawed or unsawed, for during and unto the full end of the term yet to come and yet expired...."

Transcription stopped on page 3 near the bottom of the old transcription (not page 3 original document); legalize with no references to land or Mills for John Tyzache added to partnership in 1690, by which time the saw and corn mills were already built (in next transcribed section):



and yet unexpired of these One hundred and one years and that under the respective Rents Covenants Provisions conditions Restrictions and Limitations therein expressed as the same more amply appears And whereas the said Joshua Tittery by his Deed under his Hand and Seal the fourth Day of April 1690 did for the consideration therein mentioned grant alien bargain sell enfeof and confirm demise and assign to the said John Tyzacke his

John Tyzache became 3rd 'partner' in 1690:

...and assigned to the said John Tyzacke hissixth part of all the tilled land improvements houses, **Saw and Corn mills** and all of the iron and timber works millstones tools and improvements their belonging or intended to belong...(repeats parts just above in bold above as his share was less than others)

See page six, two thirds of the way down for remainder of the Deed.

Remainder Not transcribed as all repetitive legalize with no new references to the land or Mills.

Deed
 Robt. Turner
 & al
 Attornies for
 John Thyzack

18 V 7

This indenture made this
 Eleventh Day of the Fifth mo July in the
 Third Year of the Reigon of William and
 Mary King and Queen of England Anno
 Domi 1691 Between Robert Turner of the
 Town and County of Philadelphia in the
 Province of Pennsylvania in America Merchant
 Joshua Sittery of the said place Broadglass maker
 with Consent of Richard Townsend of the said place
 Millwright and Robert Ever Thomas Tress of the
 said place Werts and William Preston of the said
 County Masow Attornies for and in name and Behalfe
 for the Proper Use and behoofe of John Thyzacke of
 London in the Kingdom of England also Broadglass
 maker with Consent of Patrick Robinson of the said
 place all of the one part And Andrew Robeson &
 Charles Sanders both of the said place Werts of the
 other part Witnesseth That Whereas W^m Penn Proprietor
 and Governor of the said province by his letters
 Patents under his Hand and Seal dated the
 Twenty fourth of the fourth mo 1684 did give grant
 and confirm ^{to the said Robert Turner his Heir and}
 assignes ^{as is mentioned} a certain Tract of Land in the said County
 called Shomack Park Beginning at a corner marked
 Spanish Oak standing by the Skoolkill River from
 thence East North East by Philadelphia Liberties
 Four Hundred and seventy perches to a corner marked
 White Oak from thence North West and by North by
 the Germantowne One hundred fifty and three
 perches to a corner marked Stake from
 thence South West Four Hundred Twenty and
 four perches to a corner marked Birch
 standing by the Skoolkill River Then down
 the said River on several courses to the
 first mentioned Spanish Oak Containing Five
 Hundred acres of Land as the same Recorded in
 the office of Rolls and publick Register at Phila-
 delphia the twenty ninth of the fifth mo 1608
 folio 13 more ample parts And whereas the
 said Robert Turner by his seals indented under his Hand and Seal

0.11

did Demise and to farm Let to the said Joshua Tittery his Heirs & Assigns fifty acres and a half of the said five hundred acres of Land as part and parcel thereof situate being being and bounded in manner therein mentioned with all its improvements and appurtenances from the nineteenth Day of June 1686 which is the Date of the said Lease for one hundred and one years under the Yearly Rent therein expressed at the rate therein mentioned during the said term as in the same indentures of Lease containing severall other mutual clauses and covenants therein (which are held as fore in effect more at length contained) And where as the said Joshua Tittery by an indenture past between him and the said Richard Townsend under their hands & Seals dated the 29th January 1686 did bargain and agree for them their Heirs & Assigns from the Day of the Date thereof to the full end and terme of the said Lease to be partners in and upon the said fifty and a half acres of Land and equalie to pay the rent and Equally to bear the charge of building the mill Mills or other improvements that they or their executors should agree to make and equalie Divide the profits and bear the losses as in the same containing some other clauses therein more at large is expressed And where as the said Joshua Tittery and Richard Townsend by their indentures under their hands and seals have sold and conveyed to the said John Tyzacke his Heirs and assigns for during and unto the full end & terme yet to come and unexpired of the said Lease one full and equall third part (the whole having been in three parts equalie divided) of the said fifty and a half acres of Land Seases and premises and of all the tilled Land Houses Saw and Corn Mills and of all the Iron and Timber Work Mill stones Tools and implements then belonging or intended to belong and then provided or intended to be provided for the mills aforesaid and of all Timber and wood Sawes and unsharpened under the said John Tyzacke his payment of the Rents duties and covenants in the said first Lease mentioned And where as it is in the said indentures mentioned that the said Joshua Tittery Richard Townsend and John Tyzacke have entered and did enter into a joint Co-partnership in the said fifty and a half acres of Land for during and unto the full end and terme yet to come and unexpired of the said one hundred and one years for the tillage of Land Building of Houses building and management of Saw or Corn Mills or any other Mill or mills or of any others improvements what so ever upon the said fifty acres and a half of Land premises aforesaid or

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any part or Parcel thereof in manner in the said
Tripartite Indentures of Copartnership mentioned
and which bear date the twenty fifth Day of March
1688 as the said Indentures tripartite containing
Therein diverse other mutually Clauses Covenants
Articles Conditions Privileges Limitations and
Restrictions more fullie and at large ex-
pressed And whereas the said Joshua Tittery
by his Deed under his Hand and Seal dated the
Eight Day of November 1690 did with the consent of
the said Richard Townsend Witnessed by his being
partie there to for the consideration therein men-
tioned grant alien bargain sell enfeof cow-
frow demise and assign to the said Andrew
Robson and Charles Sanders their revese Heirs
and assigns equalie betwix them one full just
and equal and undivided Moite & halfe part
of the said fifty and a halfe Acre of Land Leases
and premises with the halfe of all the tilled Land
Improvements Houses Saw and Cow Mills and
of all the Iron Work Timber worke Millstones
Tools and implements belonging or intended to
belong unto them provided or intended to be pro-
vided for the Mills aforesaid and of all other
Timber and Wood Sawes or usesawes for during
and unto the full end and term yet to come
and yet unexpired of the said one hundred and
one years and that under the revese Rents Cove-
nants Provisions Conditions Restrictions and
Limitations therein expressed as the same more
amply appears And whereas the said Joshua
Tittery by his Deed under his Hand and Seal
the fourth Day of April 1690 did for the con-
sideration therein mentioned grant alien
bargain sell enfeof and convey demise
and assign to the said John Aggache his
Heirs and assigns one full equal and un-
divided sixt part of the said fifty and a
halfe Acre of Land Leases and premises
with the sixt part of all the tilled Land
Improvements Horses Saw and Cow Mills
and of all the Iron and Timber Work
Millstones tools and implements then belonging or
intended to belong unto them provided or intended
to be provided for the Mills aforesaid and of all
other Timber or Wood Sawes or usesawes for du-
ring and unto the full end and term yet to come
and unexpired of the said one hundred and
one years and that under the revese Rents Cove-
nants Provisions Conditions Restrictions and Limitations
therein expressed as the same more at large also appears
Now these Present Indentures Witness that for and in
consideration of the sum of three score pounds full Silver
Money of the said Province well and paid by the said Andrew
Robson & Charles Sanders to the said Rich: Ever Thomas Chess and

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William Preston and Joshua Tittery Attornies for
and in name behalfe and for the proper use and
Behoufe of the said John Tyzacke his Heirs and
Assigns (for the said John Tyzacke his one
third and one sixth which is one just and
equall moitie and half part of the said
fifty and a halfe Acre of Land Mills Imple-
ments and premises during the years yet to
come and unexpired of the said Lease) the
receipt whereof the said Attornies doe hereby
acknowledge and there of and in Name and
behalfe aforesaid doe acquit and discharge
the said Andrew Robison and Charles Sanders their
Respective Heirs Executors and assigns forever by these
parts that they the said Attornies do by advise by
a letter direct from the said John Tyzacke to the
said William Preston to buy or sell with con-
sent of the said Patrick Robinson have granted
aliene bargain sold enfeoffed demise
assigned transferred and made over and
by these parts doe grant bargain sell enfeoffe
demise assign transfer and make over to
the said Andrew Robison and Charles Sanders
their respective Heirs and assigns equally between
them all his the said John Tyzacke his Right
Title interest use possession property claim
Demand what so ever in and to his said
one third and one sixth which is one just
and equall moitie and halfe part of the
said fifty and a halfe Acre of Land of
Land Mills Implements and premises with
all the writings relating thereto to have to hold
to them the said Andrew Robison and Charles
Sanders their respective Heirs Executors and
assigns equally between them for during
and unto the full end and tenn yet to come and un-
expired of the said one Hundred and one years mentioned
in the Leases above recited and that under their the
said Andrew Robison and Charles Sanders and their
above written respective their payment of their proportionable
part of the yearly Rents and their performance of the other
Duties and particular Covenants in the said Leases
and indentures of Copartnership mentioned to be
performed by the said John Tyzacke to the said
Robert Turner and in and to all the Clauses Covenants
Articles Restrictions Conditions and Limitations
therein contained Concerned in favor of the
said John Tyzacke and their above written
And the said Attornies in name and behalfe
aforesaid doe Covenant for the said John Tyzacke
and his above written to warrant the said assignment
of the said Leases indentures of Copartnership during the years
yet to come and unexpired of the said one Hundred and one years
to them the said Andrew Robison and Charles Sanders respective to

their respective Heirs and assigns, the said John
Tyzacke & his Heirs and assigns as also ag^{ainst}
all others claiming by law or under him them
or any of them or by his Heirs or any of them
or their respective Heirs or assigns their means
private Consent or procurement shall and well
warrant and forever defend by these Presents
And these presents & Indentures do also
witness that for and in Consideration of the
sum of one hundred and five pounds law-
ful money of the said Province in Hand paid
by the said Andrew Robeson and Charles San-
ders to the said Rob^t Turner the receipt where-
of the said Robert Turner doth hereby acknowledge
and there of doth acquit and discharge the
said Andrew Robeson and Charles Sanders
their respective Heirs & assigns for ever by
these parts &c the said Robert Turner hath
granted aliened bargained sold enfeoffed
enfeoffed and confirmed and by these parts
doth absolutely grant ^{alien} bargain sell enfeoff and
confirm to the said Andrew Robeson and Charles
Sanders equally between them each one an
equal mo^{rt}ie in quantity and quality of the
said first above recited whole five hundred
Acres of Land called Shomack Park situate lying
and being in manner above recited (excepting forth
there of the said fifty and a half Acres of Land by
the said Rob^t Turner Demised to the said Joshua
Tetterly for the said Term of one hundred and
one year and to which the said Andrew Robeson
and Charles Sanders have now right in manner
above mentioned with all the rights members ^{incorporeal} and
advantages what so ever of the said five hundred
Acres of Land (excepting as is above excepted held used
and enjoyed therewith or reputed as any part
of the same and the reversions Remainders
Rents and profits thereof and all the Estate
Right Title Interest use possession property claim and
demand what so ever of the said Robert Turner of us and
to the said Land and premises (except as is
above excepted) and all Deeds Grants
Charters Surveys Returns Letters patents
and other evidences & writings concerning
the said premises (except as is above excep-
ted) all which are situate lying and
being in the said County and are now
(except as is above excepted) in the posses-
sion of the said Robert Turner by Virtue
of the ~~parts~~ parts above recited as also he the
said Robert Turner hath granted
aliened bargained sold enfeoffed
and confirmed and by these parts
doth absolutely grant alien bargain ^{sell} enfeoff and

confirm to the said Andrew Robeson and Charles Sanders equallic between them each one an equal moitie, all his right title and interest in and to the yearly rent mentioned in the said indentures of lease given by the said Robt. Turner to the said Joshua Tittery and past between them during the years of the said lease both by past and yet to come and unexpired Resting Due and in and to allth other Wents clauses and covenants therein expressed conceived in favours of the said Robert Turner & his Heirs and assigns & in and by all and singular the Reversion & Reversions Remainders and Remainders of the said fifty and a half Acres of Land after the expiration of the said lease and in and to the fee simple and Estate of Inheritance of the said fifty and a half Acres of Land Houses and Mills there or to be built after the expiration thereof to them the said Andrew Robeson and Charles Sanders equallic between them after the expiration of the said term of one hundred and one years together with all the benefit of the said lease from the Day of the Date here of to the full end and term of the same and in and toth which lease and all and singular the clauses Covenants Articles and conditions therein contained Hee the said Robert Turner doth hereby assign the said Andrew Robeson and Charles Sanders equallic between them each one an equal moitie and to their respective Heirs and assigns forever to have and to hold the said five hundred Acres of Land (except as is above accepted) and the said fifty and a half Acres of Land as part and parcel thereof as also all the benefit profit and advantage of the said lease during the term yet to come but unexpired of the said one hundred and one years with the reversion thereof and all the articles clauses and covenants therein contained conceived in favours of the said Robert Turner his Heirs and assigns with all and singular its improvements and appurtenances reversions and premises to them the said Andrew Robeson and Charles Sanders equallic between them their Heirs and assigns and to the only use and behoofe of the said Andrew Robeson and Charles Sanders equallic between them each one an equal moitie thereof and their respective Heirs and assigns for ever (excluding) and hereby excluding survivorship & all benefits there of in law or equity for ever and under the yearly Rent here mentioned to become due to the Chief Lord of the soil of the said five hundred Acres of Land and premises and the said Robert Turner doth Covenant for him and his Heirs and assigns that they the said assignees and Deeds of Sale of the said five hundred Acres of Land (except as is above accepted) and the said fee simple thereof to them the said Andrew Robeson and Charles Sanders equallic between them

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and their above written (recluding servitude) in the manner above written again here the said Rob^t Turner and his Heirs as also all other persons what so ever claiming by flow or under him and his Heirs or by his Heir or either of their or their Heirs their means privity consent or procurement shall and will warrant and forever defend by these parts and that they the said J^m Fygeacke and Robert Turner respectively have not done nor suffered any act what so ever (excepting the Legges above mentioned granted by the said Rob^t Turner to the said Joshua Tittery his Heir or Assigns) whereby the said premises if are can shall or may be by any means lawfullie impeached charged or incumbered in any manner of way and this indenture further witnesseth that the said Rob^t Turner hath constituted and by the Tenor here of doth constitute (Blank in the original) to be his attorny to appear at the County Court of Philadelphia and there in presence of the said Court to declare acknowledge and deliver these parts to the said Andrew Robison and Charles Sanders or their certain attorny according to Law in witness where of the said Rob^t Turner for himself and the said Joshua Tittery Richard Thunsend Rob^t Ever Thomas Tress W^m Preston Attornies aforesaid to the said J^m Fygeacke have to these present indentures Caused to another of the same date tenor and contents with these parts to the intent that both the said Andrew Robison & Charles Sanders may each ^{one} of them have one in their own Custody and possession for their retires (all the premises) their Hands and seals interchangeably seth and putt the Day & Date above written Joshua Tittery Seal Robert Seal Ever Robert Seal Thomas Seal Tress William Seal Preston sealed & delivered by Rob^t Turner in part of us Henry Flower Pat^r Robison sealed and Delivered by Thomas Tress & Rob^t Ever in presence of us Jos. Pidgeon Tho: Dapwell sealed but delivered by Joshua Tittery and W^m Preston in presence of us W^m Robison Pat^r Robison's

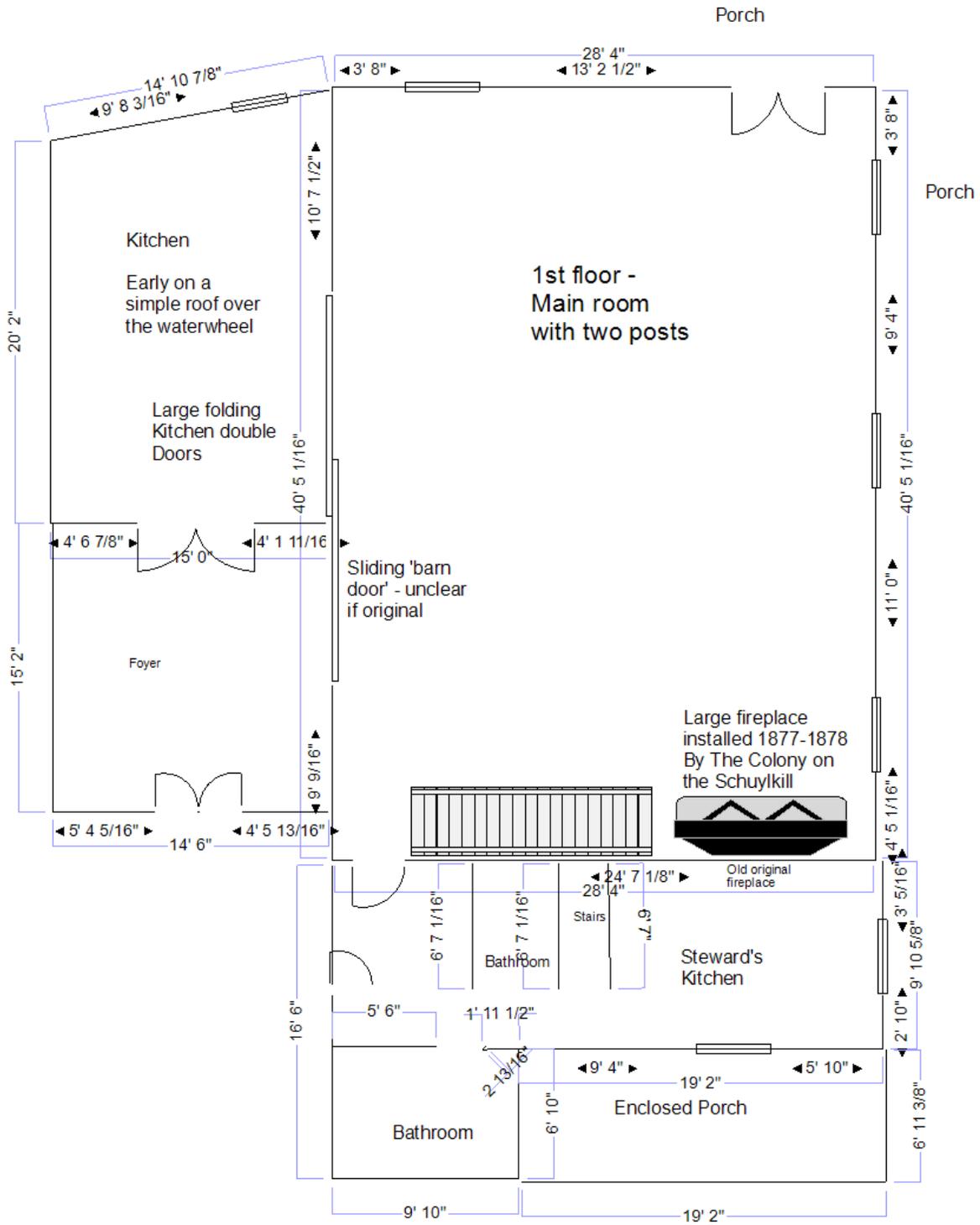
Received from the within Andrew Robison and Charles Sanders the within mentoned sum of one hundred and five pounds consideration Monie wherewith this eleventh Day of July 1691 by me Robert Turner seal sealed and Delivered in presence of us Henry Flower Pat^r Robison's & Received from the within Andrew Robison and Charles Sanders the within mentioned sum of fifty pounds consideration Monie wherewith expressed this eleventh Day of July 1691 Robert Ever Seal Thomas Tress Seal Joshua Tittery Seal Pat^r Robison Seal

Endorsed
Endorsed
Endorsed

Springfield Mill on the Morris Arboretum's Bloomfield Farm property. Originally built in 1761 as a grist and sawmill, the Springfield Mill was operated as a gristmill as late as 1907. The building, which was **rebuilt and enlarged in 1854**, still contains the interior mill works."

The Farmar Mill, aka the Mathers Mill, built by Edward Farmar (1672-1745), is still standing but deemed unsafe for visiting. It was built perhaps as early as 1690^v and "...probably **rebuilt in 1787 by Issac Mather...**" per its National Historic Registration application ([H000532_01H.pdf \(penndot.gov\)](https://www.penndot.gov/H000532_01H.pdf)). Coincidentally, Peter Robeson married Edward Farmar's daughter Sarah (1705-1755), and Peter Robeson's nephew Jonathan Robeson, Jr. married Catharine (or Katherine 1728-1770), another daughter of Edward Farmar https://archive.org/stream/historicalseketch01hist/historicalseketch01hist_djvu.txt, on February 17, 1745. See the Douglas Macfarlan map of the fifty mills in this Endnote^v. On the positive side, the Mill was recently purchased in 2022 and will be rehabilitated as office space.

^{vi} Main floor layout next page. 2nd floor is all open above the main room (except for a bathroom), and there are two rooms above the Stewards' quarters. It appears that there was once a doorway from the main 2nd floor to the Stewards' quarters that came into a room above the stairway. There is no 2nd floor above the main kitchen on the left (north side) or above the Stewards' enclosed porch (west side) or the 1st-floor bathroom to the left of that porch.



vii Patent 24 Apr 1684 signed by William Penn the "final, official deed from the Penns or the Commonwealth, which conveys clear title and all rights to the private owner." Quoted from [Land Records Overview \(pa.gov\)](http://LandRecordsOverview(pa.gov))

William Penn by Providence of God & Kings Authority Proprietary
& Governour of the Province of Pennsylvania & Territories therunto belonging
To all to whom these presents shall come sendeth greeting Whereas there
is a certaine tract of land in the County of Philadelphia called Thomas Park
beginning at a corner marked Spanish Oak standing by the Schookill River
from thence East North East by Philadelphia Liberties four hundred
& Seventy Perches to a corner marked White Oak from thence North
West & North by the German Town one hundred fifty & Threethree
to a corner marked Stake from thence West South West five hundred
Twenty & five Perches to a corner marked butch standing by the Schookill
River then down the River on severall courses to the first mentioned
Spanish Oak containing five Hundred Acres of Land granted by a
Warrant from my selfe bearing date the Twentieth day of the first month
the Thousand six Hundred Eighty & Three & laid out by the Survey
Gen. the Thirtieth day of the said Month & year unto Robt Turner
Purchaser & the said Robert Turner requesting me to confirm the same by
Patent Knoweeth that I have given granted & confirmed & by these presents
for my selfe Heirs & Successors do give grant & confirme unto the said
Turner his Heirs & Assignes for ever the said five Hundred Acres of Land
to have hold & enjoy the said Land to the only use & behoof of the said
Turner his Heirs & Assignes for ever to be holden of me my Heirs
& Successors Proprietaries of Pennsylvania & the Territories therunto
belonging as of our Mannor of Springetts Berry in the County of Bucks
in free & common Socage by fealty and he in improving & planting
same according to Regulation thereof & paying therefor to me my Heirs
& Successors at or upon the first day of the first Month in every year at Philadel
phia one English Silver Shilling for the value thereof in gold or silver
or persons as shall be from time to time appointed for the purpose in writing
whereof I have caused these my letters to be made Patent Witness my selfe
at Philadelphia the four & Twentieth day of the fourth Month the Thousand
six hundred Eighty & four being the sixth year of the Kings
Reign & the fourth of my Government

Wm Penn

Recd. the 24th Apr 1684

Warrant referenced in text as “granted: 12 Jan 1683. Note that it was called “Shomack Park.”

^{viii} 1685 For more for on the first ‘William Penn era’ Pennsylvania mill see:

<https://www.uplandboro.org/sites/g/files/vyhlif5111/f/uploads/chronology-of-upland.pdf>

“**1685** – Richard Townsend relinquished his four shares in the mill and premises and sold his 50 acres along Chester Creek to Caleb Pusey and moved to Germantown^{viii}, where he built his own mill.”

Inserted for future research: “1727 – Richard Townsend, **in his autobiographical notes of this year**, said that he brought over the mill (Chester Mills), built it, and that it was very successful, but his name does not appear in the deeds, except as an early shareholder.”

See too “Proud, Robert "History of Pennsylvania, 1797: Richard Townsend's Account” from

<https://www.delawarearchaeology.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Number-7-New-Series-1969.pdf>

^{ix} One basis for Robeson Ferry having started 1693:

The following from the Court Records will show that although what we call School Lane had been used as a road, yet it was only "on sufferance:"

Road Docket DECEMBER SESSION, **1723**.

Divers of the inhabitants of Germantown, Roxborough and Merion, by their petition desiring that the road from the Market Place of Germantown to Andrew Robinson's (Robeson's) mill and Ferry, and from the landing place of said Ferry through Merion to the great road leading from Conestoga (Old Lancaster Road) to Philadelphia (the said road having been used with great conveniency to the said petitioners for upwards **of 30 years last past**, but being only on sufferance), might be confirmed, which being considered by the Court, they do appoint Robert Evans, Robert Roberts, William Palmer, Jacob Duberry, Henry Scull, and Anthony Klenking to view the said road and make return to the next Court in order to be confirmed. (*Road Docket*, Vol. 2, p. 108.)

[Full text of "History of Old Germantown, with a Description of Its Settlement and Some ..." \(archive.org\)](#)

^{xi} Persons involved in the **1702 Partition** be as below – initial spelling as read and in the same order:

Sheriff Thomas Farmar appears to be the son of Jasper Farmar Sr. and the nephew of Edward Farmar (1672*-1745) who built Farmar's Mill (now known as Mathers Mill) in Plymouth Township [[Mather Mill — Historic Hope Lodge](#)]. Jasper Farmar Jr. and Jasper Farmar Sr. both died on the trip to Pennsylvania in 10685 on 'The Bristol Merchant.' Jasper Farmar Sr., Edward's father purchased the land Patent from Wm. Penn that covered most of Plymouth Township [Q](#))

*Edward Farmar's daughter Sarah (1710-1755) married Peter Robeson (1710-1768). Ancestry.com link **\$\$** or go to a library outside of Philadelphia: <https://www.ancestrylibrary.com/family-tree/person/tree/50664042/person/400005345189/facts>*

William Palmer*, (1672 – 1747). See early Survey containing his name and land in an area reserved for "The Frankford Company" to the east of Robert Turner's land: [Book B22 438.pdf \(state.pa.us\)](#)

Thomas Shute (wife was Elizabeth Hood, and he likely brother-in-law of Thomas Hood until her death in 1695; 2nd wife was Elizabeth Powell, dau. of Wm. Powell, d. 1721 buried Friends Arch Street Meeting House Burial Ground).

Thomas Hood, (wife Sarah Hallowell [Genealogies Details — FamilySearch.org](#); could be Hoodt based on FamilySearch [Genealogies Details — FamilySearch.org](#)) and Hoodt Survey B 23 pg 237 (Whood on some surveys but indexed as Wood.) Thomas's father was likely John Hood and his name appears on the William Palmer survey.

Matthew Houlgate (likely Immigration 31 Oct 1685 aboard the ship 'Rebecca'). See [Full text of "History of Old Germantown, with a Description of Its Settlement and Some ..." \(archive.org\)](#) "Matthew Houlgate had a fulling-mill in operation on the Wissahickon, near Germantown, before the year 1720." See page 1719 Conrad-Holgate Mills.

John Calow, (likely "**Callow**" as in Surveys; else, it seems could have been John Colly or Colley, b. 1644, Death 20 Nov 1724 Byberry, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, United States, and Grandson of Sir Henry Colley, married Susanna Gray: [Genealogies Details — FamilySearch.org](#)) Arrived 1683: [Passengers on 1683 Ships - The Welcome Society of Pennsylvania](#). Could be the son of John Callow Sr., who died 28 Jul 1699 and is buried in Friends Arch Street Meeting House Burial Ground).

John Palmer*, (1660 – 1742)

George Palmer*, (abt. 1660 – 1727) (*believed to be Geo. Jr. eldest son of Sr, died on the voyage to Pa.*)

*Three Palmers all likely brothers, sons of George Palmer, Sr., and Elizabeth, and arrived on the ship 'Elizabeth, Ann and Catharine' in 1682 (George Sr. died on the voyage) [Genealogies Details — FamilySearch.org](#) See too [Book B23 248.pdf \(state.pa.us\)](#) and narrative here: [Book B23 248.pdf \(state.pa.us\)](#) **for 5,000 acres**

Mounce Justice [elsewhere Mountse Justicen, d, c. 1749 or Mounce Gustafsson Justis b. 1658, or 1659 in Kingsessing, Philadelphia – a Swede here before William Penn (Mountse and Mounce likely the same person)], See Mounce Justice 272 acres Survey Book B23 pgs. 196, 200-203 for land and text about "Sweeds Land" [Book B23 406.pdf \(state.pa.us\)](#). See too land for him and Chriss Swanson: [Book B22 438.pdf \(state.pa.us\)](#)

John Mifflin (could be great grandfather or Gr-Gr-Grandfather Thomas Mifflin – the for whom Fort Mifflin is named), [Thomas /Mifflin/ \(1744-1800\), Sarah /Morris/ \(1747-1790\) • Landscape View • Family Tree • FamilySearch](#)

Benjamin Morgan (neighbor adjacent property to the North, reported to be a blacksmith, who died in August 1706 and was married Amelia Anna Sophia Levering in Roxborough 1700. Her father was John Wigard Levering and her mother Magdalena Bokers, their son or grandson, Wechard (or Wigard) Levering, was the owner of the land and mills in 1753). See [Levering family : history and genealogy \(familysearch.org\)](#)

John Vandervooshine [could be Hans Nous Reiner VanderSluys, Death 13 Jul 1713 Germantown, Pennsylvania,

Claus Rytenhouse [sic - seemingly Nicholas Claus Rittenhouse, son of William, the builder of the Rittenhouse Paper Mill]

xii Area Calculator used to determine a boundary (A-B) length not found in any Deed until after this analysis was completed. After this analysis was completed, deeds for both 96-acre lots were found and used to determine the boundaries of the remaining 8 acres.

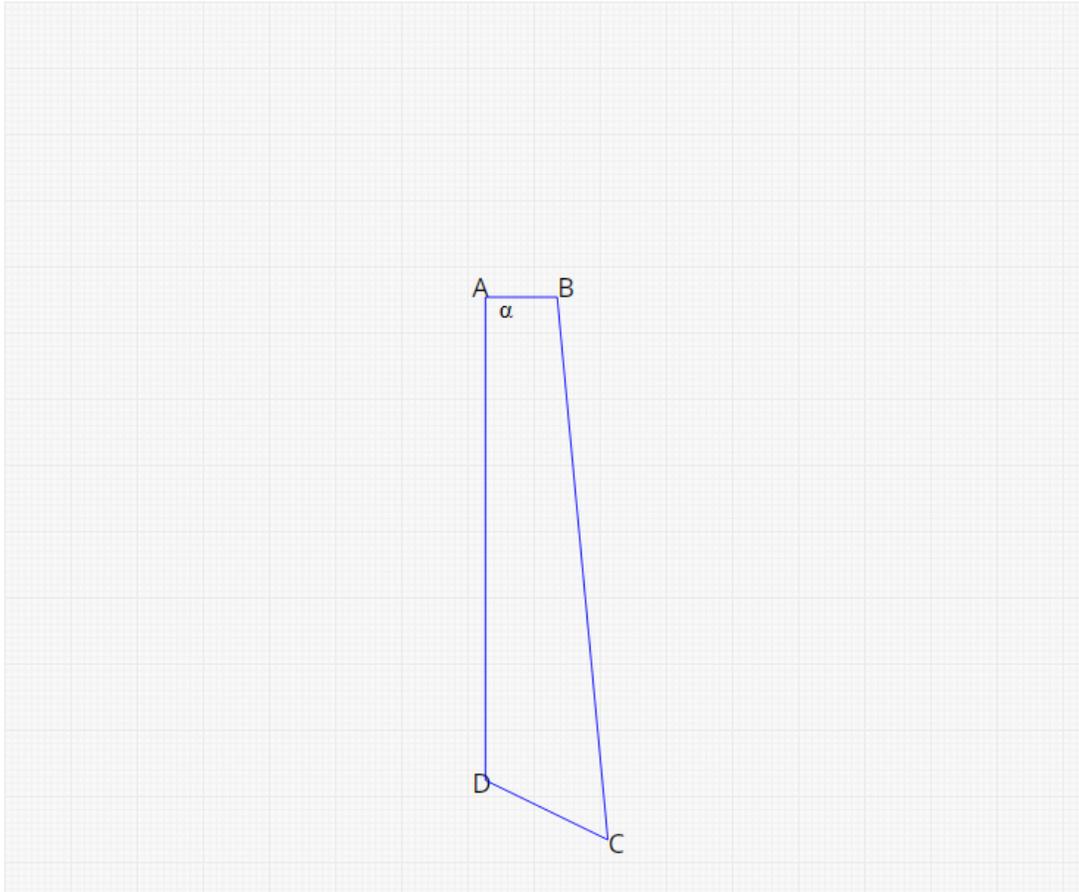
<https://academo.org/demos/quadrilateral-area-calculator/>

Point A being on the Schuylkill 2 perches (33 feet) down from the Wissahickon, per 1703 Deed land to John Vanlaer.

Area shown below is approximately 8 acres. Lengths BC, CD and DA known for Deeds: 88, 22 and 77 perches respectively.

Length AB was adjusted until the 8-acre size was calculated; 8 acres being 348,480 sq. ft.

Area: 348471.7633560254



Angle α	<input type="text" value="90"/>
Length AB	<input type="text" value="191.45"/>
Length BC	<input type="text" value="1452"/>
Length CD	<input type="text" value="363"/>
Length DA	<input type="text" value="1287"/>
<input type="button" value="Calculate"/>	

Also, below map suppld later by James Duffin with length of boundary at the mouth of the Wissahickon being 13 Perches = 214



feet:

^{xiii} The 1777 Map of the Battle of Germantown documents Mill #1's earliest 'cartographic' presence. A key point is made here: He (Hills) also seems to have been in contact with various local surveyors in both New Jersey and Pennsylvania. [Hills John Fl 1777 1816 and William Faden 1750 1836 - AbeBooks](#). While Hills reportedly was "direct eyewitness to many of the events he portrayed on his maps..." clearly Hills must have had access to other maps of the area that he then used to document the Battle from British 'after-action reports.' The search for these maps continues.

The legend "References" is hard to read, but a transcribed version was updated and is provided below:

The original map measures 25 inches long by 23 inches tall. Sketch of the surprise of German Town by the American forces commanded by general Washington October 4th, 1777, by J. Hills Lt. 23rd Regt; ass. **Essential the below is a recount of the Battle from the British perspective.**

References: A. The position of the royal army in the environs of German Town under the command of General Sir Wm Howe G. Washington arrived at Chestnut Hill oct 4th in the morning and detached one column to B one to C one to D and another to E which engaged the Lt. Infantry (light infantry) posted at F and continued their march by G. Col Musgrave advanced with the 40th regt (regiment) as far as H to support the left inf but finding the enemy had advanced as far as I. he retired & occupied the house (Chew House or Cliveden) K. which he defended till Genl Gray arrived.

Genl Kniphausen formed the left of the Royal Army at L. and placed the 2nd Batt (2nd Battalion) of Minnegerode (*a type of cannon*) at M. to support the Chasseurs and seeing the Enemy had penetrated into the Town, he detached Gls (generals) Gray, Agnew, and Stern with the 2nd and 4th Brigades & the Regt du Corps to N who forced the enemy to retreat.

During the attack the column B of the enemy arrived at O. G1 Grant formed the right of the army at P. with the 49th Rgt at Q. and attacked the column O which he obliged to retreat. The column of the enemy at C on their arrival at R. finding the column at O were retreating they retreated likewise. Genl Washington on his departure from Skippack detached Genl Potter with 2000 men & 2 pieces of cannon by the Road of Wissahicon who arrived before day at S and amus'd the Chasseurs till the Enemy retreated Lord Cornwallis arrived with the 1st Batt. from Philadelphia

and marched to T. and joined the column under Genl Gray Genls How & Grant pursued the Enemy by U. Lord Cornwallis and Genl Gray by W.

London published by William Faden geographer to the King Charing cross, March 12th, 1784.

A different version/interpretation of the References can be found here: [Hills John Fl 1777 1816 and William Faden 1750 1836 - AbeBooks](#)

^{xiv} **1822** Measurements Robeson's two Mill 1.) the "Rolling Mill and 2.) "Merchant and Grist Mills" (three wheels)

DOBSON, JOHN & JAMES

COLE ESPINOSE & PARRIS

I do Certify that on the 9th day of Dec^r 1822 I took the levels of the Wepashion Creek at Peter Robinsons Mills and found the same to be as follows

From the top of the overfall at the upper dam to the top of the Overfall at the lower dam	feet	inches
	4	11
from thence to a point near the outer end of the sheeting under the Rolling mill wheel	16	5 1/2
At which point the water of the Schuykill is at this time 14 inches deep, the Rolling mill being at rest	<u>21</u>	<u>4 1/2</u>
		total

I have also ascertained the following facts at the merchant and Grist Mills to wit

That the lower or Grist mill wheel is 15 1/2 feet in diameter

depth of Head	feet	in
	4	1 1/4
length of gap	2	11
depth of do	0	3 3/4

= 107 inches of Water

That the middle wheel is 15 1/2 feet diameter

depth of head	feet	in
	3	10 3/4
length of gap	3	3
depth of do	0	11

= 156 inches of Water

That the upper mill wheel is 15.9 diameter

depth of head	feet	in
	3	2
length of gap	2	0
depth of do	0	3 3/4

= 90 inches of Water

Samuel Mains

^{xv} Measurements to validate water power 1822 part of suit Robeson's v. Schuylkill Navigation Co. for loss of power due to Fairmount dam raising level of the River.

1822 Measurements Grain Mill Waterwheels	Wheel Diameter	Depth of Head		Length Gap		Gap Total	Depth Inches	INCHES of	Formula	
		Feet	Inches	Feet	Inches	Inches	Gap	WATER	Gap x	Gap Depth
Lower	15.50	4	1.25	2	4	28.00	3.75	107	105.00	
Middle	15.50	3	10.75	3	3	39.00	4	156	156.00	
Upper	15.75	3	2	2	0	24.00	3.75	90	90.00	
Document										
Three mills South of Ridge Ave	Wheel Diameter	Depth of Head		Length Gap		Gap Total	Gap Depth	Gap Depth	Total Depth	INCHES of
		Feet	Inches	Feet	Inches	Inches	West	East	Depth	WATER
Sawmill	14.00	4	4	3	8	44.00	2.75	-	2.75	121
Nail Factory	Missing	4	10	3	6	42.00	1.5	-	1.5	63
Robeson's Rolling Mill*	18.00	7	3.5	4	7.5	55.50	5.5	5.25	10.75	596.5
and its Head of the Wheel on its Face	11.00	(width)		1822 Graff Drawing has Wheel 10 inches above tail race bottom clearance			*Two Blade Buckets On the drawing do. = ditto			
Gap = distance between buckets on the wheel that carried the water to turn the wheel.										

^{xvi} Castner Collection from Free Library of Philadelphia on next pages – yellow highlighted items are near Robeson's Mills.

Castner Vols 21, 30, 34	Page number	Link MOST Need CTRL+CLCK	Subject
21	11	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/59177	Devil's Pool, Wissahickon, 1851
21	32	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/59197	Reading R.R. Bridge over Wissahickon, 1881 / Philadelphia - Bridge along Wissahickon Creek - old stone Bldg. Seems too far west of Creek to have had Race
21	41	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/59209	G.R. Bonfield
21	44	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/59320	"The Burnt (?) Factory" - watercolor 1848 (Gypsy Lane?)
21	46	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/59322	The High Bridge across the Wissahickon Mill #3 - Bldg N. or Ridge, west of Creek NOT Mill #2 check 2nd SOURCE!
21	59	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/59336	Viaduct over Wissahickon Creek at Rittenhouse Street
21	72	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/59349	The Statue on Indian Rock (news clipping)
21	77	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/59354	photo of covered bridge
21	79	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/59356	Bridge over Wissahickon Creek - color postcard
21	88	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/59365	Valley Green Bridge postcard,
21	91	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/59368	"The Schuylkill River opposite Wissahickon" and "Scene in Fairmount Park" and has Mill and Bridge
21	92	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/59369	Wissahickon Creek - note in pencil that says "Thomas, Barge, or Spruce Mill at Thomas Mill Rd"
21	93	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/59370	Wissahickon Creek & Valley Green Inn
30	1B	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61753	Jacob Rittenhouse Paper Mill

30	1	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61754	Postcard of David Rittenhouse home
30	3	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61758	Indian Rock postcard / Mouth of Wissahickon and has Mill from South w/ Man fishing - & Stone in Creek
30	4	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61759	In Wissahickon Valley (Kollner)
30	7	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61762	Tall Bridge over Wissahickon
30	10	http://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/zoom/61765	Road to Devil's Pool postcard, / Rex Avenue Bridge / Old Mill Dam / Thorpe's Lane
30	14	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61769	Wissahickon - J. Filmer (Livezey Mill)
30	15	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61770	Pro Bono Publico fountain / 1871 photo by Kilburn
30	20	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61775	Old Homestead on the Wissahickon by W.H. Cooper / Scene on the Wissahickon by Mumford
30	27	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61782	The scene on Wissahickon (color postcard) Wiss Hall Looking So.
30	29	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61784	Looks like the mouth of the Wissahickon (photos of State in Schuylkill club too)
30	30	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61784	Pic-Nic on the Wissahickon
30	35	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61790	Wissahickon Creek and Drive
30	37	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61792	"The Wissahickon" - Wissahickon inn - by Lauderbach
30	38	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61793	The Wisshickon (engraving) / Wissahickon Creek from the Dam
30	39	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61794	Great Newspaper clipping: "The Old Wissahickon" - 2 illustrations "The Old Log Cabin Hotel" and "The Entrance to Wissahickon Drive" and a good Narrative about the Sawmill and the Grist Mill/Robeson Rolling Mill
30	51	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61806	The scene on the Wissahickon (color postcard, 1876)
30	62	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61817	"Up the Wissahickon - Megargee's Paper Mill"
30	63	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61818	"Magarge's Paper Mills on the Wissahickon" 1866
30	64	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61819	"Wissahickon Drive" ad for Boschee's German Syrup / Green's August Flower
30	67	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61822	"The High Bridge Across the Wissahickon"
30	69	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61824	"Valley Green Hotel," "The Wissahickon - Bridge at Valley Green," and "Bridge at Mt. Airy"
30	75	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61830	Print and newspaper 1835 story about Rail-road bridge over 'Wissahiccon' & Great picture very large Mill #3
30	76	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61831	photo - "near Wissahickon"
30	77	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61832	photos - Wissahickon
30	78	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61833	photos - Wissahickon
30	80	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61835	photos - Wissahickon
30	82	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61837	photos - Wissahickon
30	90	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61845	Wissahickon at Allen's Lane
30	93	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61848	Norristown R.R. Bridge over Wissahickon Burned 1862- photo
30	98	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/61853	Newspaper clipping about Megargee family
34	1	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/62256	"Estates on or near the Wissahicon Road"
34	6	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/62262	"Tedyscung" "Devil's Pool"
34	8	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/62267	Philadelphia Mouth of the Wissahickon Creek
34	20	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/62279	A Scene on the Wissahickon, plate 49, Sasche
34	22	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/62281	"The Tradition of Indian Rock" Frank H. Taylor

34	28	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/62288	"Aeroplane viewover Narberth showing Schuylkill River, Wissahickon Drive and Site of the 1926 exposition"
34	29	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/62289	"Aeroplane view taken over proposed site of Philadelphia World's Fair, 1926 (looking southwest) showing Schuylkill River, Bala, Cynwyd and Wissahickon
34	32	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/62292	"Up the Wissahickon - Megargee's Paper Mill" "The Wissahickon - Bridge at Valley Green" and "Bridge at Mt. Airy"
34	44	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/62305	"A fairy-tale scene near the entrance of the Park in Wissahickon Valley"
34	58	https://libwww.freelibrary.org/digital/item/62319	Wissahickon Drive, Fairmount Park

Other digital collections

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Railroad bridge over the Wissahickon, near Manayunk. [graphic] / Drawn from nature and on stone by Chs. Fenderich Philada.: [Railroad bridge over the Wissahickon, near Manayunk. \[graphic\] / Drawn from nature and on stone by Chs. Fenderich Philada. | Library Company of Philadelphia Digital Collections](#) The Wissahickon Mill 1834.

Being researched: **Robeson and Paul**, Letters, 1797-1830 - merchants in iron, lumber, and general importing, mostly 1807-1813. Discussions of iron, fish, lard, pork, flour, shingles, and the general economic conditions at New York, Lancaster, Baltimore, Antwerp, Hamburg, Augusta, etc. [Holdings: Robeson and Paul letterbook \(hsp.org\)](#)
Original find from: [PEAES Guide: The Historical Society of Pennsylvania \(librarycompany.org\)](#)