

Griesemer Mill

3-1/2 miles north of State Route 562, near Manatawny
Creek, Spangsville, Oley Township

Yellow House Vicinity

Berks County

Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-1019

HABS

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Eastern Office, Design and Construction
143 South Third Street
Philadelphia 6, Pennsylvania

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

GRIESEMER MILL

HABS No. PA-1019

Location: Pennsylvania, Berks County, Yellow House Vicinity,
Oley Township, Spangsville, near Manatawny Creek,
3½ mi. N. of State Route 562.

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Present Owner: Henry W. Wagner

Present Occupant: Unoccupied

Present Use: Storage

Brief Statement of Significance: An example of a mid-nineteenth century mill, one of the last to be built in the Oley Valley.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

This small stone mill was built in 1847 by D. L. and E. Griesemer, according to the date plaque in the gable. This mill replaces an earlier one built by John Griesemer which was destroyed by a fire in 1839. When M. L. Montgomery, History of Berks County, Pennsylvania was published in 1886 the mill was owned by Jacob L. Griesemer and was one of the principal mills in Oley Township.

The Griesemer family in this country descended from John Valentine Griesemer who immigrated to Pennsylvania from Alsace in 1730. His son Caspar Griesemer who died in 1794 located in the Oley Valley. The homestead he established was successively occupied by Jacob Griesemer, John Griesemer, and Wellington B. Griesemer.

References: Croll, P. C., Annals of the Oley Valley (Reading, Penna.: Reading Eagle Press, 1926) pp. 123-128.

Fegley, H. Winslow, Among Some Older Mills in Eastern Pennsylvania (Norristown, Penna.; Pennsylvania German Society, 1930).

Montgomery, M. L., History of Berks County in Pennsylvania (Philadelphia: Everts, Peck and Richards, 1886) p. 934.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

Griesemer Mill is a relatively small stone structure, three-and-a-half stories in height with a gable roof.

The building is devoid of any architectural trim, the character being derived from the simplicity of its form and proportions. The walls and roof of the building are in fair condition.

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The dimensions are approximately twenty by thirty-five feet. The foundations and walls are of stone. The doorways are of the simplest type with no trim. The doors appear to be replacements of a later date. The windows are small double hung sash of six over six panes. The roof is a simple gable now covered by tin.

The mill is situated near the Manatawny Creek and a covered bridge called Griesemer Mill Bridge. The mill race runs under the road to the north of the mill and enters the mill from a culvert, passing through a fine segmental stone arch on the northeast side of the mill.

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