

Rockford (also spelled Rockford)
Rockford Road, west of U.S. Highway 222
Lancaster vicinity (West Lampeter Township)
Lancaster County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-368

HABS
PA,
30-LANC.Y,
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PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ROCK FORD

HABS No. PA-368

Location: Rock Ford Road, Lancaster vicinity, West Lampeter Township, Lancaster County, Pennsylvania.
Longitude: 76° 17' 16" W
Latitude: 40° 01' 13" N

Present Owner: Rock Ford Foundation.

Present Use: Museum.

Significance: Built from 1793 to 1794, Rock Ford served as the country residence of General Edward Hand until his death in 1802, and it was occupied by his family until 1807. During the Revolutionary War, Edward Hand served as Adjutant General of the Continental Army and played an important role at the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown in October, 1781. After the war he returned to a limited medical practice, and became engaged in political activity with the Federalist Party. In March, 1791 Washington appointed Hand to the post of Inspector of the Revenue for Survey No. 3, a position which he held until September, 1801.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of Erection: 1793-94.
2. Architect: Not known.
3. Original and subsequent owners: The information below lists property ownership records of the house. The source is Lancaster County Courthouse.
 1. Edward Hand, two tracts: 1785-1810 (site of house)
1792-1810 (adjoining tract)
Book DD, p. 192; Book NN, p. 489.
 2. William Montgomery, two tracts: 1810-1826. Book 4, p. 571 & 576.
Partition Proceedings, Orphans' Court Records, Misc. Book 1825-8, p. 302.
 3. Fidelia R. Vandyke (Granddaughter, William Montgomery)
139 Acres, 33 Perches (Upper farm including house)
Guardian, Samuel Humes: 1828-1846
Guardian, John L. Atlee: 1846
Deed Book 1825-1828, p. 302.

4. Christian Kieffer, Upper farm: 1846-1848. Deed Book C, Vol. 7, p. 187.
 5. Meshack Rockafield, Upper farm: 1846-1849. Deed Book H, Vol. 7, p. 81.
 6. James Evans, Upper farm: 1849 to Death. Will probated Oct. 17, 1864, Will Book Y, Vol. 1, p. 220.
 7. Robert A. Evans, Upper farm: 1864-1892. Deed Book Y, Vol. 13, p. 542.
 8. George F. Kendig, Upper farm: 1892-1902. Deed Book T, Vol 16, p. 465; excepting tract conveyed to H.W. Williams 1893 (originally sold to Hand, Book NN, p. 489). Deed Book I, Vol. 14, p. 113.
 9. Christian K. Kendig, Upper farm: 1902-1925. Deed Book C, Vol. 27, p. 271.
 10. C. S. Bucks to John M. Groff to Marvin E. Bushong: 1925-1933. Deed Book C, Vol. 27, p. 269; Deed Book Q, Vol. 28, p. 342.
 11. Pennsylvania Water and Power Company: 1933-1954. Deed Book N, Vol. 31, p. 419.
 12. City of Lancaster: 1954-1956. Deed Book A, Vol. 44, p. 40.
 13. Lancaster Area Incinerator Authority: 1956. Deed Book F, Vol. 45, p. 66.
 14. Lancaster Junior League - Rock Ford Foundation: 1958. Deed Book F, Vol. 52, p. 174. Deed made November 20, 1962.
4. Original plans and construction: No original plans exist. However, as a result of the 1958-1962 restoration, the house's original design has been preserved.
 5. Alterations and additions: The information below records both the past changes and the improvement and restoration work made during the 1958-1962 restoration program.

East, west and south (rear) first floor porches rebuilt. Original porches were removed in late 19th century.

Rear elevation (south) - second window from left had been removed and door installed. Window restored.

Closets removed adjacent to outside wall, and door installed for passage between northwest and southwest rooms. Cabinets restored from original material stored in attic, except for two pairs of doors which are new.

Pipeless furnace installed in north end of center hall. Removed under restoration program, and new flooring installed on first floor where register was removed.

Fire had burned a portion of original floor in southwest room and modern 2-1/4" flooring installed. Modern flooring removed and new flooring now match original.

First floor joists in southeast room replaced. Original joists failed due to dry rot.

As part of the restoration program all ceilings of first and second floors and ceiling at the third floor over stairs were removed. Insulation and hot water radiant heating were installed, with new plaster ceilings.

The northeast room of ground floor has been partitioned for toilet rooms and boiler room.

Flue from boiler room has been run new from boiler room through first floor, taking a portion of the closet in passage between the northeast room and the southeast room, and joined to the flue from fireplace in the northeast room.

The two rooms, third floor east side, remodeled to provide kitchen, dining, bath and dressing room. Entire third floor is used as an apartment for the caretaker.

Ground floor provided with under-floor drainage system, membrane waterproofing, and radiant heat in concrete slab under brick floors.

Exterior of foundation walls have been waterproofed and exterior foundation drainage system installed.

B. Historical Context:

FACTS ON THE OCCUPANCY OF ROCK FORD

1794-1802 Occupied by General Hand and his family. Hand died in 1802.

1802- Occupied by various members of the family.
11-13-1807

Sarah Hand married Samuel Bethel June 15, 1803 and moved to Columbia, Pennsylvania, to a house he built for her. (letters from a Lancaster Lady, pamphlet, Lancaster County Historical Society).

Edward Hand's widow, Katharine Ewing Hand, died "after a short but severe illness," June 21, 1805. (Intelligencer & Weekly Advertiser, June 25, 1805).

Dorothy Hand married Edward Brien, September 17, 1805 and moved to Martick Forge, Pennsylvania.

John Hand was admitted to the Lancaster Bar in 1805 (Ellis & Evans, History of Lancaster County).

Jasper Hand during this period was apprenticed to various doctors in the Philadelphia area.

Other children included Mary Hand, Mrs. Sarah Ewing and Edward.

11-13-1807 John Hand shot himself.

1807 - House presumably unoccupied; farm run by tenants living in
Summer 1828 a tenant house which may have been the log office.

1-3-1826 William Montgomery, the owner of Rock Ford as well as a great deal of other property, died intestate.

2-27-1827 Proceedings in the Orphans' Court divided Montgomery's estate into four parts - three children and one granddaughter. Fidelia R. Vandyke Hasluck, the granddaughter, inherited Rock Ford. Her guardian was Dr. Samuel Humes. The lower half of Rock Ford farm went to her uncle, John R. Montgomery, the famous lawyer. The property was surveyed in March, 1827. This survey was outlined in a drawing on the deed, T-8-563, dated June 12, 1844.

1827 - Property owned by Fidelia Hasluck, and operated by her
1846 guardian, Dr. Samuel Humes; later by John L. Atlee, a trustee appointed by the Court of Common Pleas upon the petition of Fidelia Hasluck and her husband, who lived in Baltimore during their ownership of Rock Ford.

- 1828 - Andrew Stiffel and his family moved in and lived there for
1835 seven years. His son stated in 1886 that he remembered
the three porches.
- 1836 Jacob M. Goodman born at Rock Ford. Jacob K. Goodman "for
some years lived on the Rock Ford farm on the Conestoga
near this city." (Lancaster Examiner and Herald, November
9, 1864).
- 1846 Property sold by John L. Atlee to Christian Kieffer
(Deed: C-7-187). Directory for Lancaster, 1843:
Christian Kieffer was a coppersmith in the first square of
East King, south side. Directory, 1857: Christian
Kieffer had a foundry on Chestnut Street and a stove
warehouse at 7 East King Street, and a house on North Lime
near Orange Street. He was at one time Mayor of
Lancaster. With a history of tenant occupation of Rock
Ford up to this time, it is probable that this was merely
one of his investments, as he was a prosperous man.
- 1848 Property sold to Meshack Rockafield for \$10,000. This is
a very interesting matter, as it may be a straw-man deal.
Meshack Rockafield is listed in the Lancaster directories
of 1857, 1859 and 1863 as a carpenter living on South Duke
and South Queen Streets; as a laborer in 1866, again as a
carpenter in 1868, and as a watchman living on Strawberry
Street in 1873 and 1877. He does not appear to have been
the type to have \$10,000. He was the only owner before
1892 who was not a leading citizen of Lancaster.
- 1849 Property bought by James Evans listed in 1843 as a
gentleman living on the corner of East Orange and North
Lime Streets, with his sister-in-law, the daughter of
Michael Gundaker, a prosperous 18th century Lancaster
citizen, and her son, Robert, and his brother, John L.
Evans, also listed as a gentleman. James Evans died
October 12, 1864 in his 74th year, leaving Rock Ford to
his nephew, Robert A. Evans, along with other property.
James Evans' deed to Rock Ford was finally recorded, on
September 22, 1865.
- 1864 - Property owned by Robert A. Evans was listed in the
1892 Lancaster directories as follows: 1859, house 80 East
King; 1863, house 84 East King; 1866, house 82 East King.
(The street numbers were changed in this period); 1868,
Evans, McEvoy and Company, Bankers, 16 East King; house 82
East King; 1873, house 211 East King; 1886, 26 North Lime
Street.

- 9-25-1886 "Mr. Hess, who farms the land, occupies a part of the house with his family." (Intelligencer, September, 25, 1886). This article mentions ghosts as frightening the tenant woman in 1828, and says that they laughed like sensible people at the absurd stories of some of the former tenants.
- 8-28-1889 Robert Evans died. His will made on May 17, 1889 was probated September 3, 1889 in Will Book Y-13-542. He left various cash bequests, which the money in his estate would not cover, so a suit was brought by the legatees to sell Rock Ford to settle the estate (October 3, 1891), but there were no buyers at that time. Rock Ford was sold to George Kendig on November 7, 1891 and the deed recorded April 1, 1892.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: Rock Ford is a fine 1790s country home with handsome features and fine interior woodwork.
2. Condition of fabric: Restored condition.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: The house measures approximately 49' (five-bay front) x 39' (four bays) and is a two-and-a-half story structure.
2. Foundations: Random coursed rubble of native blue limestone.
3. Walls: The basement walls are stone; the exposed west wall is plastered. The rest of the house is of brick. Flemish bond is used on the front elevation, except for the watertable which is laid in common bond. All other walls are laid in common bond, with headers every fourth course. The front elevation is further embellished with a double brick beltcourse. The watertable is of molded brick.
4. Structural system, framing: Brick bearing walls with wood beams for floor joists.
5. Porches: There are a series of unbroken one-story porches on the south, west and east elevations. Doric columns with pedestals support the roofs. Only the west porch has a "balustrade" that was installed between the columns. These porches are copies of the originals made during the 1958-1962 restoration; they rest on the original stone foundations.

6. Chimneys: Two medial brick chimneys, each with a double projecting brick band.
7. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: There are two doors: a central front door and a central rear door. Both open onto the correspondingly central hall. The front door, a reconstruction, is of a classical design: pilasters, a fanlight and a pediment. It is entered by a four-step stoop. The door of the rear elevation is a 6-panel type.
 - b. Windows and shutters: Windows on the first floor and the basement floor of the west elevation have 12/12 lights. Those on the second floor and on the gable ends have 12/8 and 6/6 lights respectively. The top sashes are fixed; the lower sashes are counter-balanced with flat cast-iron weights. Most windows have flat brick arches and keystones; the front windows have original sandstone keystones. Paneled shutters are used on the first floor windows only.
8. Roof:
 - a. Shape, covering: Gable roof with slate shingles (originally wood). The framing is mortised and tenoned.
 - b. Cornice: Continuous plain cornice. The outlookers for gable end cornices are framed and pinned to end rafters.
9. Martin houses: Each gable end has a martin house. They come in two parts, which are separated by cyma reversa moldings. They are made of poplar, with the exception of the perches which are of oak. The "supports" under the houses are convex moldings. They are finished on the top with cornices. For a view of one of the houses, see HABS drawing, sheet 4 of 13.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: Central hall floor plan throughout. Two rooms each side flank the hall. See also sketched floor plans in the drawings.
2. Stairways: There are two stairways. A main stairway runs from first to third floors. It is an open-string stair with turned newel posts, square turned balusters, pendants and a molded handrail. It is entirely of poplar. The other stair leads to the basement, and is a closed-string with an oak newel and a plain rail (no balusters).

3. Flooring: In the basement: originally brick in center hall and two west side rooms; earth floors in two east side rooms. All other floors have replacement flooring that matches the original.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Ground floor: stone walls plastered in all rooms. First floor: Brick partitions. Plaster walls and ceilings. Second and third floors: Brick partitions in second floor. Third floor partitions are wood frame and plastered on hand-split oak lath.
5. Openings:
 - a. Doorways and doors: Many doors are 6-panel type and framed with architraves.
 - b. Windows: The windows of the first and second floors are likewise framed with architraves. Second floor has folding shutters.
6. Decorative features and trim: This house has fine original interior woodwork and trim. See HABS photographs and drawings for these features.
7. Hardware: Not recorded.
8. Mechanical equipment:
 - a. Heating, ventilation: Not recorded.
 - b. Lighting: Not recorded.
 - c. Plumbing: Not recorded.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Original Architectural Drawings:

Drawing showing Rock Ford by David McNeely Stauffer, dated 1882. Property of Mrs. Joseph Carson, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

B. Early Views:

Lancaster County Historical Society, 230 N. President Avenue, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Photographs of Rock Ford taken in the second half of 19th century and early 20th century.

C. Bibliography:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Lancaster County Historical Society, 230 N. President Avenue, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Papers and letters relating to Rock Ford.

Lancaster County Courthouse, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Property records, wills, inventories, etc.

Pennsylvania Historical Society, 1300 Locust Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Letters of Edward Hand, Jasper Yeates and Sarah Yeates.

Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. Letters of Edward Hand, Jasper Yeates and Sarah Yeates; Peter Force transcripts.

New York Public Library, Fifth Avenue and Forty-second Street, New York, New York. Letters of Edward Hand, Jasper Yeates and Sarah Yeates.

New York Historical Society, 170 Central Park West, New York, New York. Letters of Edward Hand, Jasper Yeates and Sarah Yeates.

Letters of Edward Hand, Jasper Yeates, and Sarah Yeates. In possession of Mrs. Joseph Carson, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

National Archives, Washington, D.C. Letters of Edward Hand, Jasper Yeates and Yeates. Fiscal Branch, General Records Division.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Ellis and Evans. History of Lancaster County.

Lancaster County Historical Society, 230 N. President Avenue, Lancaster, Pennsylvania. Newspaper articles relating to Rock Ford and its occupants from the old Lancaster Journal, years 1794 - 1807.

Newspaper article. Lancaster Examiner and Herald, November 9, 1864.

Newspaper articles. Lancaster Intelligencer and Weekly Advertiser, June 25, 1805; September 25, 1886.

Lancaster Business Directories, various years of the 19th century. Place of repository not known (consult Lancaster County Historical Society for their location).

D. Likely Sources Not Yet Investigated:

Pennsylvania Historical Society, 1300 Locust Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Papers relating to Rock Ford.

Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Third and North Streets, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. Papers relating to Rock Ford.

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