

Ruins of Rock House

ROCKY MOUNT CANAL, LOCK KEEPER'S HOUSE

Great Falls Vicinity

Chester County

South Carolina

HABS No. SC- 386

HABS  
SC,  
12-GREFA,  
1-

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  
*Ruins of Rock House*  
ROCKY MOUNT CANAL - LOCK KEEPER'S HOUSE

HABS No. SC-386

Location: Great Falls vicinity, Chester county, South Carolina.

Present Owner: S. C. Department of Parks, Recreation & Tourism

Present Use: None; however, the building is being moved from its present location to Landsford Canal. Landsford Canal, approximately 16 miles upstream of Rocky Mount, is being restored and the Lock Keeper's house will serve as an interpretive center.

Significance: This building is the only structure of its type remaining in South Carolina from the canal construction period of the 1820's.

PART I - Historical Information

A. Physical History

1. Little information is available concerning this structure. Local historians credit this building to Robert Mills; however, extensive research has not supported this theory.
2. Date of Construction: c. 1825-30.

B. Historical Events

Rocky Mount Canal was constructed c. 1825-30 under the legislative Act of 1818, which appropriated \$1,000,000 for the building of roads, canals and improving rivers in South Carolina. These improvements were deemed necessary to offset the decline in the price of cotton due to competition from other southern states. Rocky Mount was one of a series of four canals that skirted the shallows and shoals of the Catawba River. However, the system of canals were extremely expensive and inefficient, and soon fell into disuse with the expansion of railroads in the 1830's. Navigation on the Catawba ceased by 1838.

C. Sources of Information

1. Old Views: One existing photograph taken in 1910 showing the front view, the building is shown intact with the roof and windows and appears livable.

2. Bibliography:

Hollis, Daniel W. Inland Navigation in the South Carolina Piedmont, 1968.

Wallace, David D., South Carolina, A Short History, page 373-375.

3. From information compiled by the History Section of the Department of Parks, Recreation and Tourism.

## PART II - ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural Character: This is an example of republic architecture and is probably typical of the canal support structures built at other locks.
2. Condition: Severely vandalized, all windows, doors and interior trim is missing. The floor structure and roof is missing and several sections of the walls have been torn down.

### B. Description of Interior

1. Over-all dimensions: This stone house, approximately 39 feet by 22 feet consists of one story.
2. Wall construction: Stone, the larger stones were scored to give a smaller appearance.
3. Chimneys: There are two chimneys, one on each side wall.
4. Openings, doors and windows: One door at the front and four windows at the front and back.

### C. Description of Interior

1. Walls: Masonary covered with plaster.
2. Interior details are completely destroyed.

ADDENDUM TO:  
ROCKY MOUNT CANAL, LOCK KEEPER'S HOUSE  
(Rock House, Ruins)  
Great Falls vicinity  
Chester County  
South Carolina

HABS No. SC-386  
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1-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C St. NW  
Washington, DC 20240

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ADDENDUM TO  
ROCKY MOUNT CANAL, LOCK KEEPER'S HOUSE  
HABS No. SC-386

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
ROCKY MOUNT CANAL, LOCK KEEPER'S HOUSE  
(Rock House, Ruins)

This report is an addendum to 2 data pages previously transmitted to the Library of Congress.

In March 2003, research proved that this structure had been recorded under two separate numbers, one with photographs only and one with measured drawings and written historical data. To bring these items together, the photographs in HABS No. SC-158 were de-accessioned and added to HABS No. SC-386 by this addendum.

Information on the index card for HABS No. SC-158 included the following:

Rock House Ruins  
Great Falls  
Chester County  
South Carolina

On Catawba River. Regular ashlar, one story, pilaster-strip treatment across front. Date unknown. 2 ext. photos (1940).  
Card prepared Oct. 1975.