

THISTLE FACTORY DWELLING - c. 1828 - 2 River Road, Thistle-Ilchester vicinity. This double stone house perched on a terrace facing River Road with its second story rear providing access at grade level to Hilltop Road, is the last dwelling surviving in 1979-1980 of the row of cotton factory tenements photographed by the WPA HABS program in 1936. Thistle was a milltown founded in 1928 by the Morris Brothers. These houses were shown as a row of three as far back as the 1859 Sachse lithograph of the bird's eye view of the entire valley. The town was described as fresh and new in Charles Varle's 1833 View of Baltimore, a travel book. The mill (still standing, BA 144) converted to silk production in 1899, and in 1922 was acquired by Bartgis Brothers and switched to the manufacture of pasteboard for their carton-printing business. The plant continues in cardboard production, but the town has gradually fallen into disuse, battered by various floods. The other riverfront houses photographed as recently as 1965, have disappeared. The one surviving house is in a vernacular style, of fieldstone, with large inside-end chimneys, and gable-roofed. Immediately to the east is a Gothic revival communal spring house built of granite, still full of clean water in 1980. Gutted by fire in late 1980. Also marked "House No. 12" in crayon.