

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Maryland	
COUNTY: Baltimore	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON:
Rockland Historic District

AND, OR HISTORIC:
Rockland

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:
East and West Side of Falls Road at Junction of Old Court Road

CITY OR TOWN:
Brooklandville

STATE Maryland	CODE 24	COUNTY: Baltimore	CODE 005
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3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress <input type="checkbox"/> In Process <input type="checkbox"/> Being Considered	Yes: <input type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
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4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:
Dr. Robert Johnson

STREET AND NUMBER:
Rockland

CITY OR TOWN:
Brooklandville

STATE: Maryland	CODE 24
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5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Hall of Records

STREET AND NUMBER:
st. John's College, College Avenue

CITY OR TOWN:
Annapolis

STATE Maryland	CODE 24
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6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:
Maryland Register of Historic Sites and Landmarks

DATE OF SURVEY: 1971

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:
Maryland Historical Trust

STREET AND NUMBER:
2525 Riva Road

CITY OR TOWN:
Annapolis

STATE Maryland	CODE 24
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Baltimore
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7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Good	<input type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Situated along Falls Road, a few hundred yards west of the Jones Falls Expressway in Baltimore County, Rockland contains fifteen buildings. These include a general store, tavern, the shell of a blacksmith shop, a carriage house, several log buildings, a group of stone rowhouses, a mill, and an eighteenth-century dwelling. Although all of the original public buildings except the smithy have been converted into private dwellings, nothing has been done to change the integrity of their original exterior appearances.

The Rockland Mill,¹ located on the west side of Falls Road facing northeast, is a large, rectangular building of stone construction. At the facade the structure has two stories and is five bays in length. There are transomed center doors and windows of six-over-six pane sash. At the west elevation the structure is three stories in height and five bays in length. The extremely gradual pitch of the gambrel roof is broken by cross gables and peaked dormers. Later Victorian additions include two-story flanking wings and a brick chimney shaft with a heavy ornamental cap.

The Miller's House, (A)¹ circa 1800, and is a two-story dwelling of an "end-hall" floor plan. Three bays in length, it has an 'A' frame roof, the ridge of which is broken at the south end by a large, flush, gable-chimney. To the west wall a two-story frame addition was built in 1890.

Facing southeast onto Old Court Road is the Tavern (B)¹ which is a four-part composition. The two stone portions were built first and later connected by a two-story frame hyphen. From exterior observations it is felt that the one-story wing is the earliest part and may date prior to 1800.

Of Federal character, the General Store (C)¹ as has the Tavern, has been renovated for use as a dwelling. The facade with its large double door, appropriate for a store, and the date stone, bearing the date 1813, at the second floor level have been preserved intact.

The first distinct block of Rowhouses (D, E, F)¹ dating circa 1820-30, is a finely constructed stone building composed of four dwelling units. Each original unit is two bays in width and three stories in height at the facade. The commonly shared 'A' frame roof has its ridge (north/south) broken by two large brick chimney stacks. To the northwest end of this block is a second group (H,I) of two units. This later duplex addition has two stories and each unit is four bays in width. Originally there was a one-story porch extending the width of both later units.

¹See site map.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- Pre-Columbian
- 15th Century
- 16th Century
- 17th Century
- 18th Century
- 19th Century
- 20th Century

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

- | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal | <input type="checkbox"/> Education | <input type="checkbox"/> Political | <input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric | <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering | <input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Phi- | <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Historic | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Industry | losophy | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture | <input type="checkbox"/> Invention | <input type="checkbox"/> Science | _____ |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Landscape | <input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Art | Architecture | <input type="checkbox"/> Social/Human- | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Commerce | <input type="checkbox"/> Literature | itarian | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Communications | <input type="checkbox"/> Military | <input type="checkbox"/> Theater | _____ |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation | <input type="checkbox"/> Music | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Transportation | _____ |

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Rockland, a village surrounded by interstate highways, is one of the surviving examples of a small, quiet, sylvan community of the early nineteenth century. It is caught in the midst of visual and aural pollution of twentieth-century technology. The extant industrial and domestic structures represent an aspect of the state's social and economic past rapidly being disfigured and destroyed.

The District contains a mill, a series of good examples of nineteenth-century genre architecture, several commercial structures and the Falls Turnpike Road as well as being the former home of an innovational cotton printing process.

The beginnings of Rockland lie in the eighteenth century when Thomas Johnson (d. 1791), the founder of the Johnson family in America, consolidated into one large farm several tracts of land in Baltimore County. Johnson probably lived in the "Eighteenth Century House," (N) the oldest building at Rockland.

Johnson died in 1791; his considerable estate eventually became the property of his third son, Dr. Thomas Johnson. The latter studied medicine at the University of Pennsylvania and served in the Maryland legislature. His name appears in the Baltimore City Directory for 1796 as a practicing physician. Later city directories give no mention of his name indicating that Johnson moved to his father's country estate.

Johnson's fortune was founded through his Baltimore County lands and from property interests he controlled for his wife, Joanna Giles Johnson. She had inherited land and the right to ground rents, which her husband managed, on Fells Point in Baltimore City (a National Register historic district). For at least a century the Johnson family received a large income from these holdings.

The industrial development of Baltimore County and, to a larger extent Baltimore City, centered on Jones Falls. The construction of the Falls Turnpike Road stimulated this growth. Incorporated in 1805 the instigators of the road initially wanted to connect Baltimore City with Richard Caton's lime kiln at

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7. DESCRIPTION continued

On the east side of Falls Road, directly opposite the General Store, stands the shell of a c. 1815 Blacksmith's Shop (J). This was once a large, rectangular, stone structure; now (1972) only three of the original walls remain intact. The original facade was removed and renovated to allow for its present use as a garage.

A short distance north of the Blacksmith's Shop is a two-story Frame House (K) of a two-part composition. The original house is the three-bay section at the south end. Its first-level windows still retain their original batten shutters. An unusual feature of this house is its foundation walls of hewn logs enclosing a full cellar beneath the original dwelling.

Standing a few hundred feet north is a Frame House (L) possessing an exterior similar to many houses of the post World War I period. However, this was once a frame block of three separate dwelling units, each two bays in width and one-and-one-half stories in height. Though completely renovated on both the exterior and interior, traces of its original design are still discernable.

A 1805-1820 two-part Dwelling (M) is located a few yards away from the Frame House (L). This house is of log and frame construction, the log portion of which is of the earliest date. The two-story frame section has beaded clapboarding on three walls; the north gable displays what appear to be clapboards of random width riven boards.

On the crest of a hill at the extreme north end of the town is a one-and-one-half story frame eighteenth century House (N, see photograph). It is unusual because it is of a style more closely associated with the counties of Southern Maryland than with those of the northern area. Originally three bays in width (c. 1750), the house was later enlarged, about 1770, by an addition of two bays width at the north end. The projection of the roof to form a porch conjecturally dates from the time of the c. 1770 addition. This porch roof possesses a coved ceiling with raised panels and ovolo mouldings. To the north end of the building is a recessed two-story stone wing. This contains a large kitchen with a massive fireplace on the first floor level. A few feet away from the northeast corner of this building is a Square Stone Building (O) of two-story height, with a wood shingled pyramid roof. Access to its interior is gained through a double door on its west wall, and it may safely be assumed that this structure was a carriage house of a very distinct design. While the main house dates from 1750 to 1775, the stone wing and

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(Number all entries)

7. DESCRIPTION continued

carriage house do not appear to have been built before 1800.

Fifteen buildings have been included in this survey. There are others in or near Rockland which may have early nineteenth-century origins. There are numerous sites within the village which will be worth further study.

8. SIGNIFICANCE continued

Brooklandwood to the north of Rockland. Following the falls the turnpike passed right through the Johnson property. The Johnsons do not figure prominently in the early history of the road although Thomas Johnson owned Falls Road stock. By the end of the nineteenth century, however, the Johnsons, as well as Richard Caton's descendants, held the controlling interests in the company which still collected tolls.

The "Eighteenth Century House" predates the road. The alignment of the rest of the structures at Rockland along the roadbed indicates they were constructed subsequent to the choice of the route of the Falls Turnpike Road, c. 1806.

The combination of water power from the Jones Falls plus adequate road transportation made the Falls valley a natural site for industrial development. Factories still line the Falls today. The convenience of the valley was apparent to nineteenth-century railroad builders who placed the Baltimore and Susquehanna Railroad there as well as to twentieth-century highway engineers who ran Interstate 83 through the valley to Baltimore City.

The small commercial buildings at Rockland were probably constructed and occupied in conjunction with the opening of the road. The blacksmith's shop, the general store and the tavern were natural businesses for the area.

The buildings were rented by the Johnson family before the 1830's. The southern half of the stone row was rented with the Rockland Mill. These four houses were sold with the mill in 1855, which substantiates the claim of local historians that mill workers lived in the houses.

The Rockland Mill has had a history fraught with financial difficulty. Originally the Johnsons maintained a flour mill on the site. In 1830 Dr. Thomas Johnson and his son William Fell Johnson (d. 1862) the owners, leased the site, including a mill, a miller's house and stabling, to Albin Mellier. The lease

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8. SIGNIFICANCE continued

stipulated that the Johnsons would erect a "stone dye house" one hundred feet by thirty feet. By mid-1831 Mellier's cotton mill was producing between seven and eight thousand yards or two hundred fifty pieces of calico per day. In 1836 he incorporated the Maryland Print Works Company to print cotton.

Mellier's operation at Rockland was short lived for, in 1842, the Johnsons leased the mill to new tenants, Frederick Dawson and Philip Dawson. A year later the Dawson's operation folded and a Philadelphia cotton printer, Samuel Comly, Jr., came to Rockland and rented the mill. Although the Rockland Print Works produced four hundred pieces per diem, his operation failed and by 1847 Comly was bankrupt. In 1855 Johnson sold the mill and eight and five-eighths acres to Richard W. Hook. Two years later the mill and the interior machinery burned. The property was sold at public auction for \$2550. Numerous firms and individuals owned the Rockland Mill from the 1850's until 1927 when William Fell Johnson (d. 1968) bought the property bringing it back into the Johnson family.

In industrial history the significant period of the Rockland Mill is its early years. Among the Johnson family papers exists a list of the cotton printing machinery at Rockland Mill written after one of the early failures, possibly in the 1840's. The calico printing machines, including a three-color, a two-color and a one-color machine, are unusual for the 1840's. The early cotton printing at Rockland was an innovational process--although not a financial success.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES continued

Cordell, Eugene Fauntleroy. The Medical Annals of Maryland 1799-1899. Baltimore: Williams and Wilkins, 1903.

The Evening Sun (Baltimore), April 15, 1968.

Johnson family manuscripts on deposit at the Maryland Historical Society, Baltimore, Maryland.

Laws of Maryland. 1804 chapter 91; 1816 chapter 115; 1835-1836. Chapter 79.

Niles Weekly Register (Baltimore), August 27, 1831.

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

The American (Baltimore), November 2, 1831, July 7, 1847.

Baltimore County Land Records, Hall of Records, Annapolis, Maryland and Baltimore County Courthouse, Towson, Maryland.

Baltimore County Plat Books. Baltimore County Courthouse, Towson, Maryland.

Baltimore County Probate Records. Hall of Records, Annapolis Maryland.

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

(See Continuation Sheet)

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY

CORNER	LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	39°	24'	11"	76°	40'	09"
NE	39°	24'	11"	76°	40'	02"
SE	39°	23'	55"	76°	40'	02"
SW	39°	23'	55"	76°	40'	09"

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES

LATITUDE			LONGITUDE		
Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
0			0		

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 24

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: J. Richard Rivoire and Nancy A. Miller

ORGANIZATION: Maryland Historical Trust

DATE: July 20, 1972

STREET AND NUMBER: 2525 Riva Road

CITY OR TOWN: Annapolis

STATE: Maryland

CODE: 24

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665). I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name Orlando Ridout IV

Title State Liaison Officer for Maryland

Date July 26, 1972

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

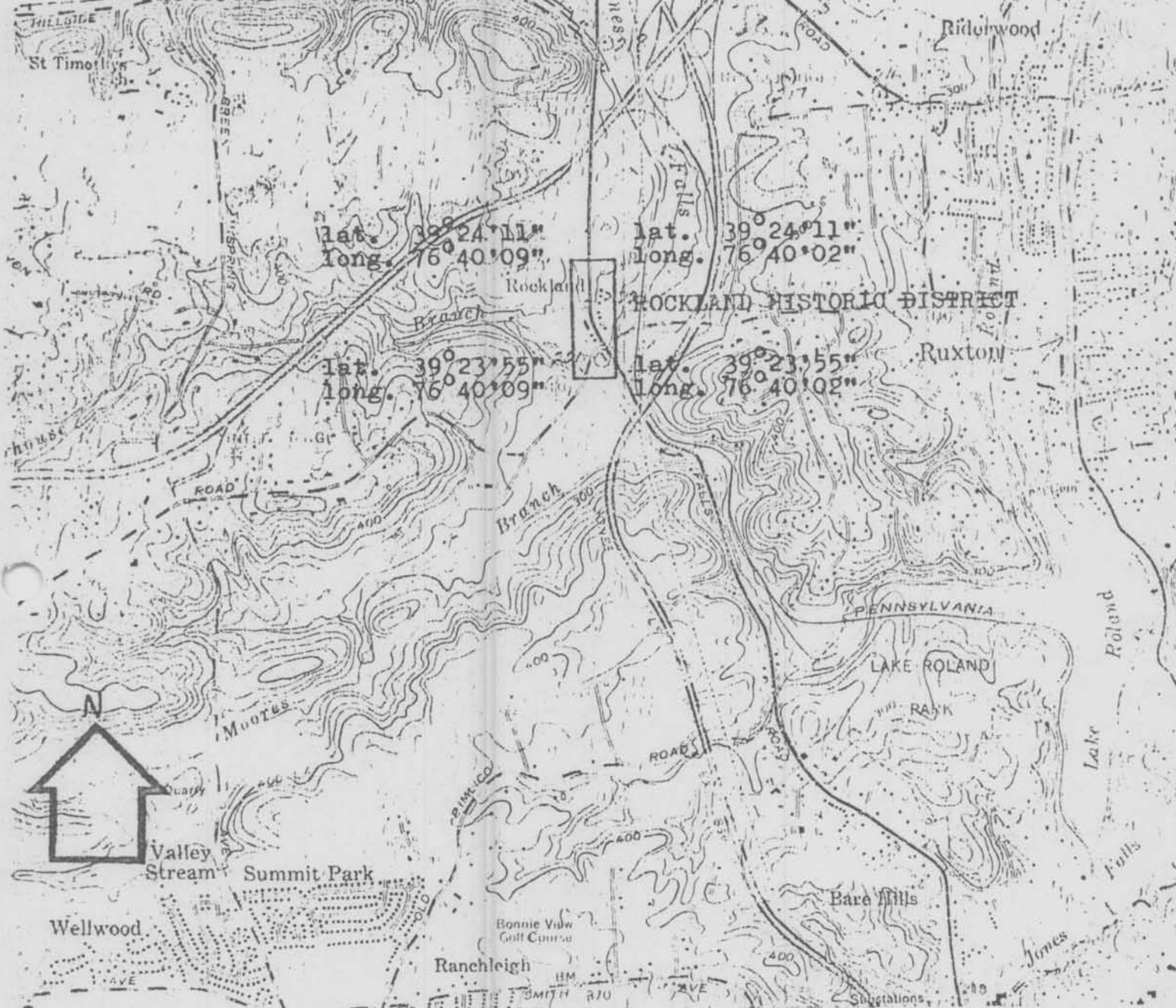
ATTEST: _____

Keeper of The National Register

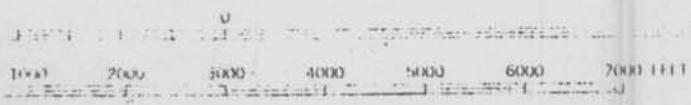
Date _____

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

Spring Valley
COCKEYSVILLE QUADRANGLE
 USGS 7.5 minute map
 scale: 1:24 000
 Photorevised 1966



SCALE 1:24000



CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
 DATUM: U.S. MEAN SEA LEVEL



BA-221
 BA-222