

**Report on the  
Hendrickson House  
pre 1860**

**Parcel 60.5.116  
106 Landenberg Rd.  
Landenberg, PA**



Hendrickson House as it appeared around 1905 from behind the Landenberg Hotel (WCCP)

**New Garden Historic Commission  
June 5, 2013  
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**author: David Hawk  
contemporary photographs: David Hawk & Michael Leja  
historic photographs: from the collections of the Chester County Historical Society  
and the White Clay Creek Preserve**

## Historical Narrative

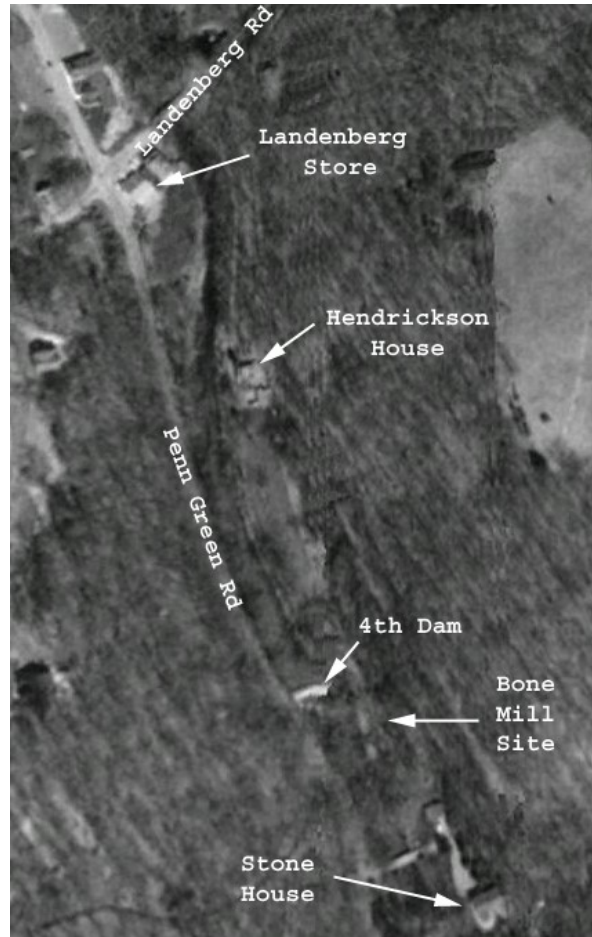
Following the successful importation of English textile technology at Slater's Mill in Rhode Island in the early 1790s, entrepreneurs up and down the east coast of the United States began searching for promising water power sites.

A sixty foot drop in a one-mile stretch of the East Branch of the White Clay Creek in the vicinity of present-day Landenberg attracted the attention of local entrepreneurs as well as investors in Philadelphia. Over a couple of decades starting around 1810 a series of four dams were constructed that captured nearly the entire fall.

The village of Chandlersville (renamed Landenberg around 1860) grew up around the third and fourth dams that were built by Enoch Chandler: the third in 1817 and the fourth sometime before his death in 1830. This fourth dam located



The 1860 Kennedy map of the area. The white rectangle outlines the area shown in the satellite photo. The locations of the Hendrickson House, the Spoke Mill, and the Stone House are shown.



Satellite photo of the Bone Mill parcel just south of the Landenberg Store on the other side of the creek from Penn Green Rd.

just above the present-day township line powered a mill used at various times over the next century as a textile mill, a spoke factory, and a fertilizer factory where bones were ground up (the mill is still popularly remembered as the "Bone Mill"). This mill was on an 11 acre tract partly in present-day New Garden Township and partly in present-day London Britain Township. After Enoch Chandler's death the mill tract was owned by Samuel Strahorn (thru 1865) and then by Joseph Fisher (thru 1875).

A right-of-way from the parcel to Landenberg Rd was established in 1873, probably necessitated by the construction of the railroad which went in around that time.

After the death of Joseph Fisher, who died a debtor, his wife Elizabeth broke up the 11 acre property in 1875 for easier sale to satisfy the creditors. The entire 11



The Hendrickson House as it appeared in 2013. The original house is to the left, a modern one-story addition to it's right, and a two bay garage. Today only the garage remains.

acre property was described as containing a message, tenement and woolen mill.

This mention of “tenement” is the first definitive reference to the Hendrickson House in the deed run. Earlier deeds refer to a message, but that is probably the still-standing stone house in London Britain Township now accessed via the narrow private bridge from Penn Green Rd.

A one-acre parcel containing the tenement was sold to David B. Niven. David Niven died in 1877 and the property passed on to Septimus E. Niven who owned it until 1926. The Niven family was a prominent local family that resided in the

large mansion one-half mile to the south, but it is unlikely any members of that family ever lived in the tenement house. After Septimus’ death it was inherited by two nieces who resided elsewhere and they sold it six years later.

The house was purchased by Howard Hendrickson Jr. in 1932 and the house stayed in his family for three generations: Howard from 1932 to 1936, Henrietta and Manly Hendrickson from 1936 to 1952, and then Betty and Joseph Hendrickson after 1952.

The house was put up for sale after Joseph Hendrickson’s death, however failure of the perk-test scuttled any future use as a residence and the house remained unsold for some time. Eventually the parcel was purchased by New Garden Township in 2012 to be used as a park and a part of the New Garden Township Trail System. The unoccupied house had deteriorated significantly when it was demolished in January of 2014.



The “Bone Mill” as it appeared around 1900 (CCHS)



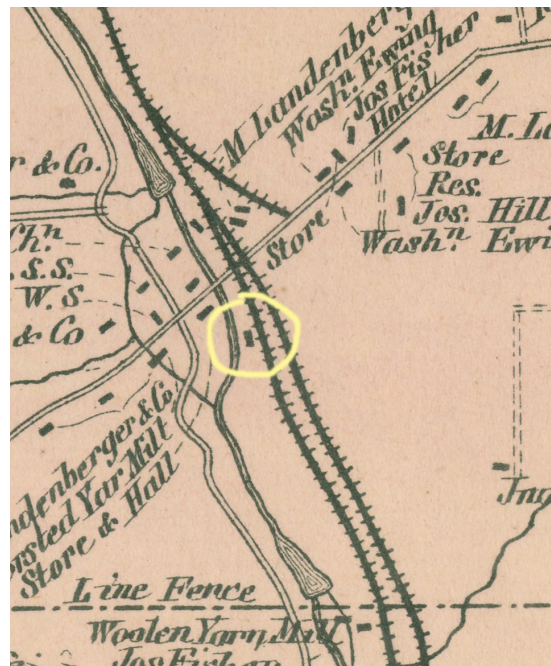
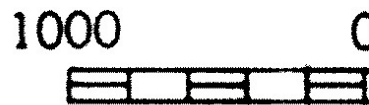
The stone house downstream from the Hendrickson house as it appeared in 2013. The original structure (having two small second story windows) is the left side of the house.

## Dating the Hendrickson House Using Historic Maps



Historical maps for the Landenberg area provide evidence for dating the Hendrickson house to pre-1860. Such evidence is not conclusive since it may only indicate a different structure in the vicinity. The original maps were often more of a sketch as to the location of structures rather than a precise location, and structures may be hundreds of yards off of their proper location.

To the left is a modern USGS map that shows a fairly precise location for the Hendrickson House. The bottom dashed line is the township boundary. The scale in feet is shown below. The other two maps are scaled similarly to the USGS map.



The 1860 Kennedy map shows a structure that is most likely the Hendrickson House. No owner is associated with the marked location on the map.

The 1873 Witmer Landenberg detail map shows a structure that is probably the Hendrickson house, although it seems to be located a bit to the north of its proper location in the sketch.

No evidence of a structure at this location was found on the 1873 Witmer New Garden Township map, or on either of the 1883 Breous pages that show Landenberg.

## Structure Description

The Hendrickson House was originally built sometime before 1860 as an 850 sq-ft two story frame house. There were two rooms downstairs and three upstairs. There was a porch with a doorway on the north side of the house facing the village and Landenberg Rd. The original floor plan is shown on p. 7.

Structural evidence shows that the 850 sq-ft house was built all at once rather than the western part first followed by the later addition of an eastern wing. The varying width floorboards on the second floor run continuously from the NW bedroom through the eastern one.

Sometime in the twentieth century the house was expanded with a large family room, a full sized kitchen, an upstairs bathroom, and a new porch on the west (creek) side of the house. The porch on the north side of the house was removed and a large picture window added. A garage and parking area were also added on the south side of the house. These twentieth century additions are not documented in this report.

The partition wall that extends into the east bedroom was most likely a 20th century modification when the bathroom was added. This wall would have extended the hallway to give direct access to the new bathroom from the other bedrooms.

The historical integrity of the house was severely impacted by these additions as well as vinyl siding and plywood paneling applied over many of the plaster walls.

The two bedrooms overlooking the creek have the best historical integrity in the house. They retain their original plaster walls and floors, and possibly the windows and some hardware.



Around 1905 there was a porch on the north side of the house (detail Herbener Photo—WCCSP)



The original north side porch has been replaced by a large picture window. A large porch overlooking the creek was built on the west side of the house.



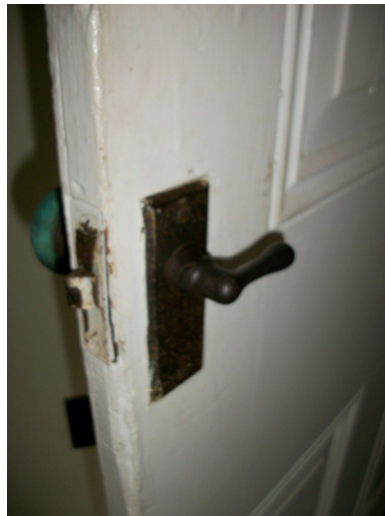
East Elevation View: (1) the second floor east bedroom with the original roofline above. (2) the 20th century bathroom addition with extended roof. (3) 20th century addition (family room and kitchen).



Attic view photo showing rafters taken from an access door in the east bedroom ceiling looking west.



The two west-side (creek-side) bedrooms are the most historically intact rooms in the house. They retain their original plaster walls and floors, and possibly the windows and some hardware.



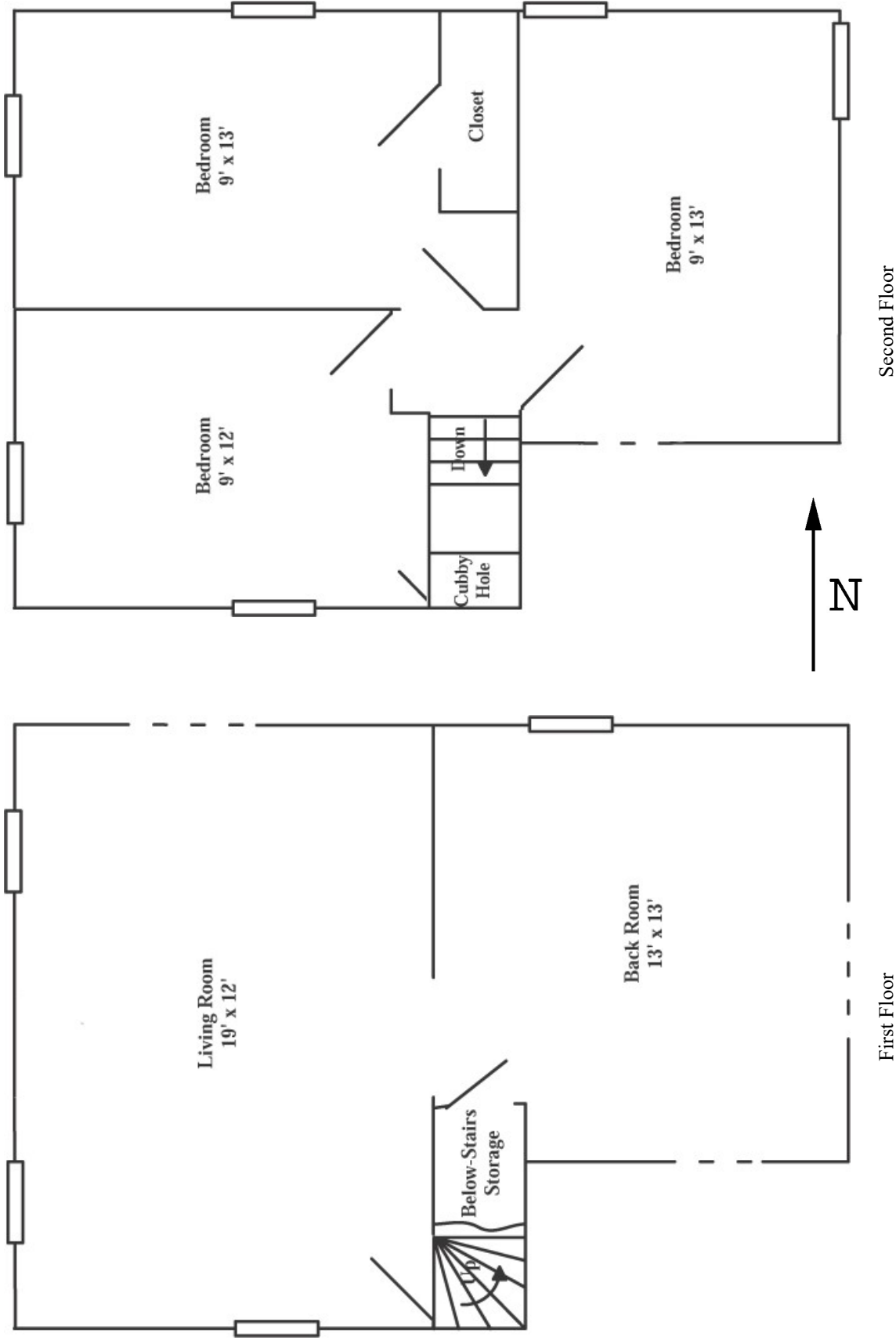
The cubbyhole over the stairs in the south-west bedroom .



View of the base of the winder stair leading from the living room to the upstairs bedrooms.



The modern picture window, plywood paneling, and new doorways have impacted the historical integrity of much of the house.



**Floor Plan of Original Portion of House**

## Site Description

The Hendrickson House is located on a one acre parcel just south of Landenberg on the eastern bank of the East Branch of the White Clay Creek. Most of the parcel is steep slope through which two railroad tracks were cut around 1870. The house sits on a small section of flood plain squeezed between the railroad tracks and the creek. Access to the parcel is from the north via a 385 ft right-of-way to Landenberg Rd.

