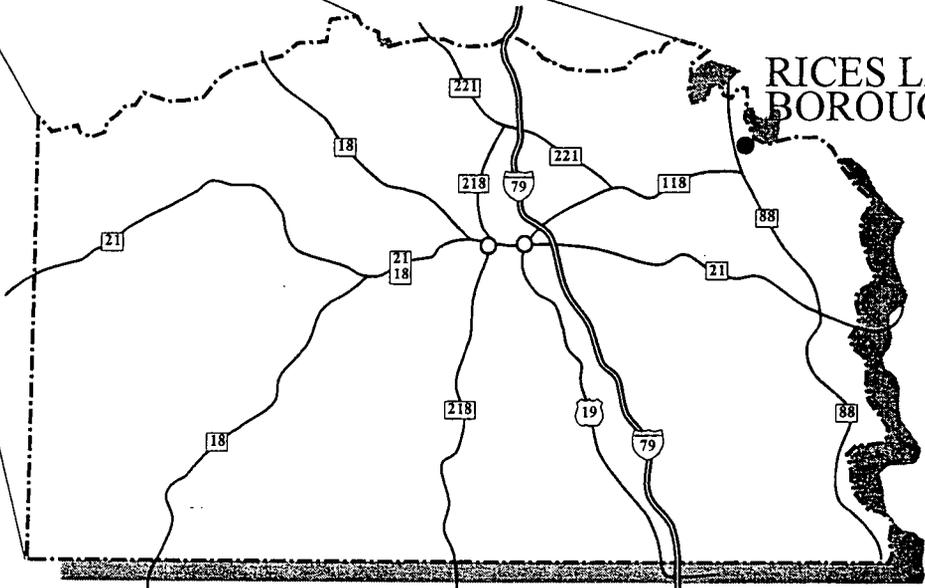
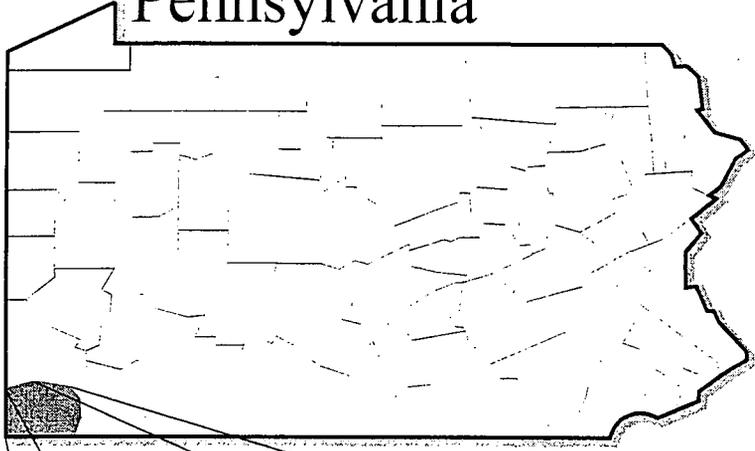


Pennsylvania



RICES LANDING
BOROUGH

GREENE COUNTY

PHASE I: BACKGROUND STUDIES

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The initial step in the Comprehensive Planning process is to assemble, compile, and analyze all the data pertinent to the past, present, and future development of the community in a series of **Background Studies**. This process can be classified into a number of major categories. For this municipality, the following categories have been utilized: Historic and Cultural Resources, Physiography, Land Use, Housing, Population, Economy, Transportation, Community Facilities, Public Utilities, and Financial.

A. Historic and Cultural Resources

HISTORIC AND CULTURAL RESOURCES¹

Rice's Landing Borough, Greene County, is located in Jefferson Township bordering Cumberland Township and the Monongahela River, near the northeastern corner of the Greene-Fayette County line. It is influenced by the economies of the two townships and neighboring boroughs as well as Greene County. Therefore, for purposes of this analysis, the Borough is compared to the commonwealth and county totals including the boroughs and townships which surround it. Rice's Landing is surrounded by Cumberland, Greene, Franklin, and Morgan Townships in Greene County and Luzerne Township in Fayette County. Several boroughs share the region with Rice's Landing and will share similar demographics and trends. Therefore, the "study area" will include: the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Greene County, Jefferson Township, Cumberland Township, Carmichaels Borough, Jefferson Borough, and of course Rice's Landing.

During the eighteenth century, Western Pennsylvania, including the area today known as Jefferson Township and Rice's Landing, was one of heated conflict. American Indians of the Six Nations regularly hunted in, and traveled through, the area and claimed it as their own. Both the British and the French also claimed the area, and later the colonies of Pennsylvania and Virginia argued over boundary issues. Military events at Fort LeBoeuf, Fort Necessity, Fort Duquesne, Bushy Run, and Fort Pitt clearly demonstrated this struggle for territory, and served to delay settlement of the region. Following a brief period of relative peace on this western frontier in the mid-1760s, colonists began to rebel against British control, and the waging of the American Revolution again halted settlement. In 1784 the military and land conflicts were finally resolved, in part by the surveying of the Mason Dixon Line, and the area was officially opened for settlement. Due to the continued threat of Indian hostilities, however, regular settlement did not begin until later in the eighteenth century.

The earliest white settlement of the area today known as Greene County probably occurred around 1751 by Dr. Thomas Eckerlin and his two brothers. Settlers of this period encountered a beautiful landscape with fertile soils and abundant water and forests. Eighteenth century settlers soon converted the land to cultivated fields, and what could not be grown or made at home was shipped over rough roads from Winchester or Hagerstown. What is today recognized as Jefferson Township, in the eastern part of the county, came to be known for its production of wheat, oats, corn, hay and potatoes. Whiskey also became a popular product throughout the township and the region; when early settlers learned that converting grain to whiskey brought larger profits than simple grain, whiskey became a major commodity. By 1788 the county had seventy registered distilleries.

Greene County, situated in the southwest corner of Pennsylvania, was officially created on February 9, 1796 from a part of Washington County. At the time of its establishment, the county had five townships, including Morgan, Richhill, Cumberland, Greene, and Franklin. Shortly after organization, population of the county began to increase and numerous houses and mills were erected, many along the Monongahela River and its numerous tributaries. The Monongahela was

¹ This history is based on the following sources: Bates, Samuel P. *History of Greene County, Pennsylvania*. Chicago, 1885. *Caldwell's Illustrated Historical Centennial Atlas of Greene County, Pennsylvania*. Condit, Ohio: J. A. Caldwell, 1876. *McConnell's Map of Greene County, Pennsylvania*. Philadelphia: Tuttle & Co., 1865. Rice's Landing Historic District National Register Nomination Form.

a critical part of the nation's inland commercial navigation system, and a key to the country's development in the nineteenth century. Before improvements were made to the navigation system, a packet trade prospered in the area, and a number of villages that thrived on shipping and trading sprang up along the river.

One of these shipping and trading villages was first settled in 1786 by John Rice, who established himself in the vicinity of Pumpkin Run along the Monongahela. Abijah McLean later settled nearby. The Rice and McLean settlements became known as Rice's Landing and Newport. Subsequent early land owners in the area included Otto Morris and Henry Rinehart. Rice's Landing, from its inception, developed as a commercial community; Newport developed as an industrial settlement.

By 1798, population in the area had increased such that Jefferson Township was officially established from the southeastern part of Morgan Township. Jefferson is an irregularly shaped township approximately two miles wide and fifteen miles long. It is situated to the west of Cumberland Township, and is bounded at the southwest by Franklin and Greene Townships.

In 1818, the National Road was opened through southwestern Pennsylvania, utilizing a route south of Rice's Landing. While some interests moved away from river-based enterprise in favor of developments nearer the turnpike, Rice's Landing continued to thrive on river activities. By the 1830s, keelboats and flatboats docked at the settlement, where warehouses were erected to store whiskey, salt, flour, and other commodities. The Sedgewick and Hughes families were important merchants who operated some of these warehouses. They also operated commission houses and general stores in Rice's Landing.

Navigation on the Monongahela was often unreliable, and not until 1854 were measures taken to improve this difficulty. In that year the Monongahela Navigation Company began to make improvements to the waterway, including the construction of Lock #6 at Rice's Landing. The lock was completed in 1856, and by 1859 Rice's Landing was described as a thriving settlement that benefitted greatly from the slackwater and the shipping facilities. By the mid-nineteenth century, Rice's Landing had developed into a leading distribution point for goods. From Rice's Landing goods were shipped to numerous locations in Greene County including Carmichaels, Ceylon, Jefferson, Martinsville, Ruff's Creek, Morrisville, Waynesburg, Hopkins' Mills, Newtown, and numerous other villages and settlements. A ferry at the northwest end of town provided access across the river to Fayette County, and a boat launch located at Pumpkin Run improved river access.

In 1865 the settlement had four stores, a saw mill, commission house, grocery store, warehouse, and approximately twenty residences. (See Maps # 2 and 3) By 1876 Rice's Landing had approximately 300 residents, including two blacksmiths, three carpenters, two masons, one sign painter, one cooper, one engineer, four shoemakers, two teachers, several farmers, river men, and merchants, a dealer in stock and produce, and a postmaster and an assistant postmaster. Buildings erected in the village included two commission houses, three dry goods stores, two schoolhouses, one church, one grocery, one grist mill, one saw and planing mill and lumber yard, and two hotels (the Monongahela and the What Cheer House). (See Map # 4.) A pottery works, the Excelsior Pottery, which operated between 1870 and 1885, still stands in Rice's Landing.

Many of the boats that passed through Rice's Landing after the middle of the nineteenth century were barges that transported the product of Greene County's rich bituminous coal industry -- an

industry that was responsible for an important period of development in Rice's Landing. The first major coal mine in Greene County was established by the Dilworth Mining Company in 1880; the works consisted of a deep shaft mine and 190 coke ovens located along the river on the northern border of Rice's Landing. (Parts of the mining complex still stand.) Coal and coke were loaded directly onto barges from this riverside mine. The success of the operation encouraged additional settlement. By 1888 the village had approximately 388 residents.

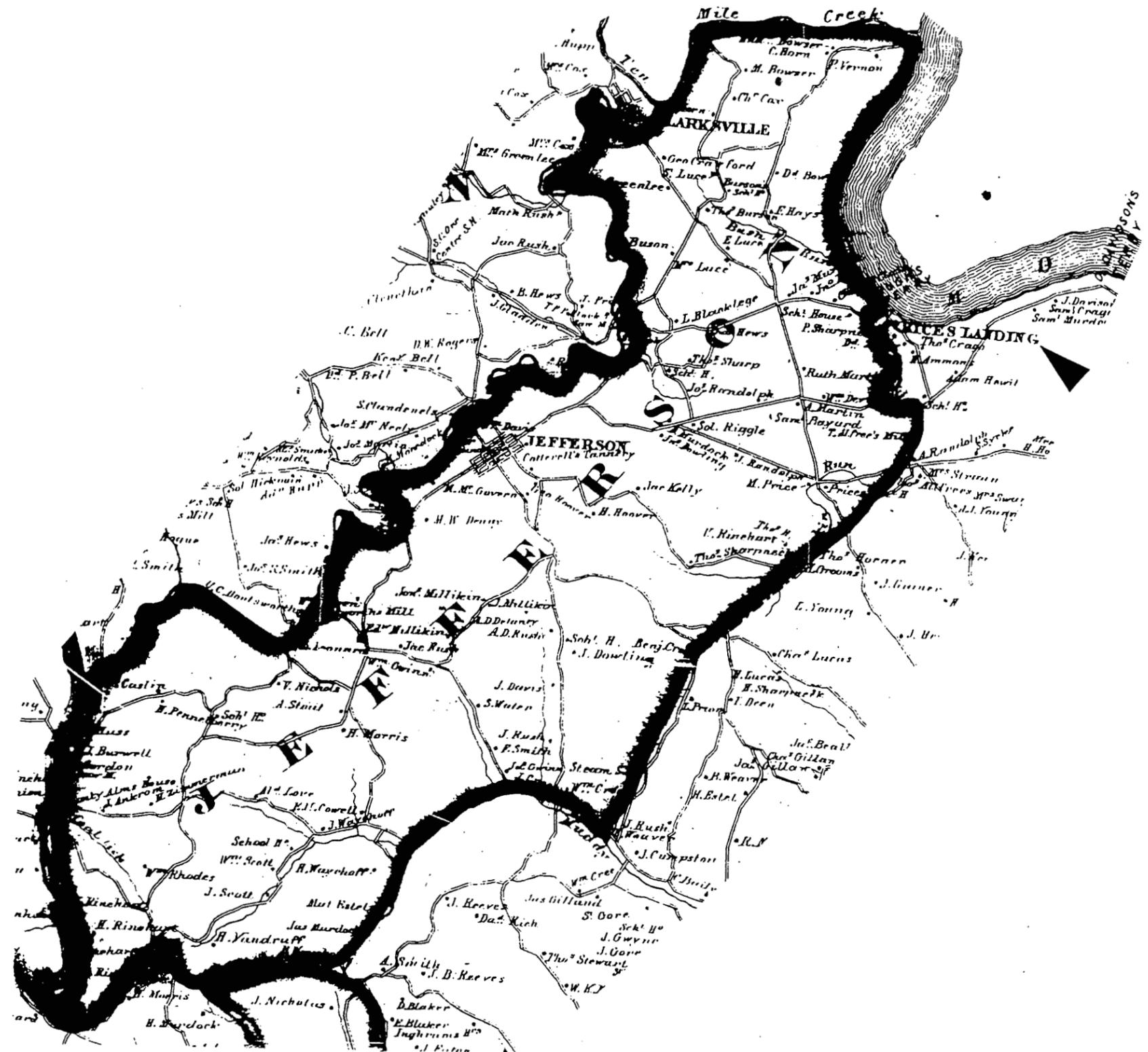
In the twentieth century, the settlements at Rice's Landing and Newport continued to develop. In 1903 the communities, which had been previously divided by the Cumberland/Jefferson Township line, were incorporated as the borough of Rice's Landing. In 1906 the Pittsburgh, Virginia and Charleston Railroad (later the Pennsylvania Railroad) extended a line from West Brownsville past the Dilworth Mine to a new station near Third Avenue in Rice's Landing. In 1913 the line was extended through the southeast part of town, continuing on to Crucible and Nemaquin. In 1914, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers began a two-year project to refurbish Lock #6.

In the early twentieth century, the borough continued to benefit from the Dilworth mine, which produced 100,000 tons of coal per year in the 1910s and 1920s. In 1914 the Rice's Landing Coal and Coke Company owned the Dilworth Mine, and within a few years the H.C. Frick Coke Company acquired it. During Frick's ownership, the Union Supply Store, a company store, was erected at Main and Third Streets and numerous one and two-story semi-detached workers houses were built on Main Street, on Red Row (an extension of Main Street), and on the hillsides adjacent to the railroad. Frick's developments encouraged additional settlement and soon the Rice's Landing Realty Company subdivided and began to sell surrounding farmland. The Dilworth Mine continued to operate until 1930. In 1964 the lock on the Monongahela was abandoned, but remnants of the structure remain.

On December 24, 1992, a portion of the borough of Rice's Landing was listed as an Historic District on the National Register of Historic Places. (See Map # 5.) The district is composed of 63 buildings, five structures, and four archaeological sites. It is dominated by vernacular buildings of one and two stories dating from the mid-Victorian to Craftsman periods. The district derives its significance from the community's development as a river port community along the Upper Monongahela River in the mid-nineteenth century and from subsequent development related to the railroad and coal industries in the early twentieth century. Its well-preserved architecture continues to illustrate this important combined development of river navigation, rail transportation, bituminous coal mining, and early industry.

RICES LANDING BOROUGH Comprehensive Plan Greene County

RICES LANDING and JEFFERSON TOWNSHIP IN 1865



From *McConnell's Map of Greene County, Pennsylvania*, Published by Tuttle and Co. in Philadelphia in 1865.

This project was financed (in part) by a Grant from the Small Communities Planning Assistance Program through the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Community Affairs.



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Comprehensive Planners/Land Planners
Historic Preservation Planners

RICES LANDING BOROUGH Comprehensive Plan Greene County

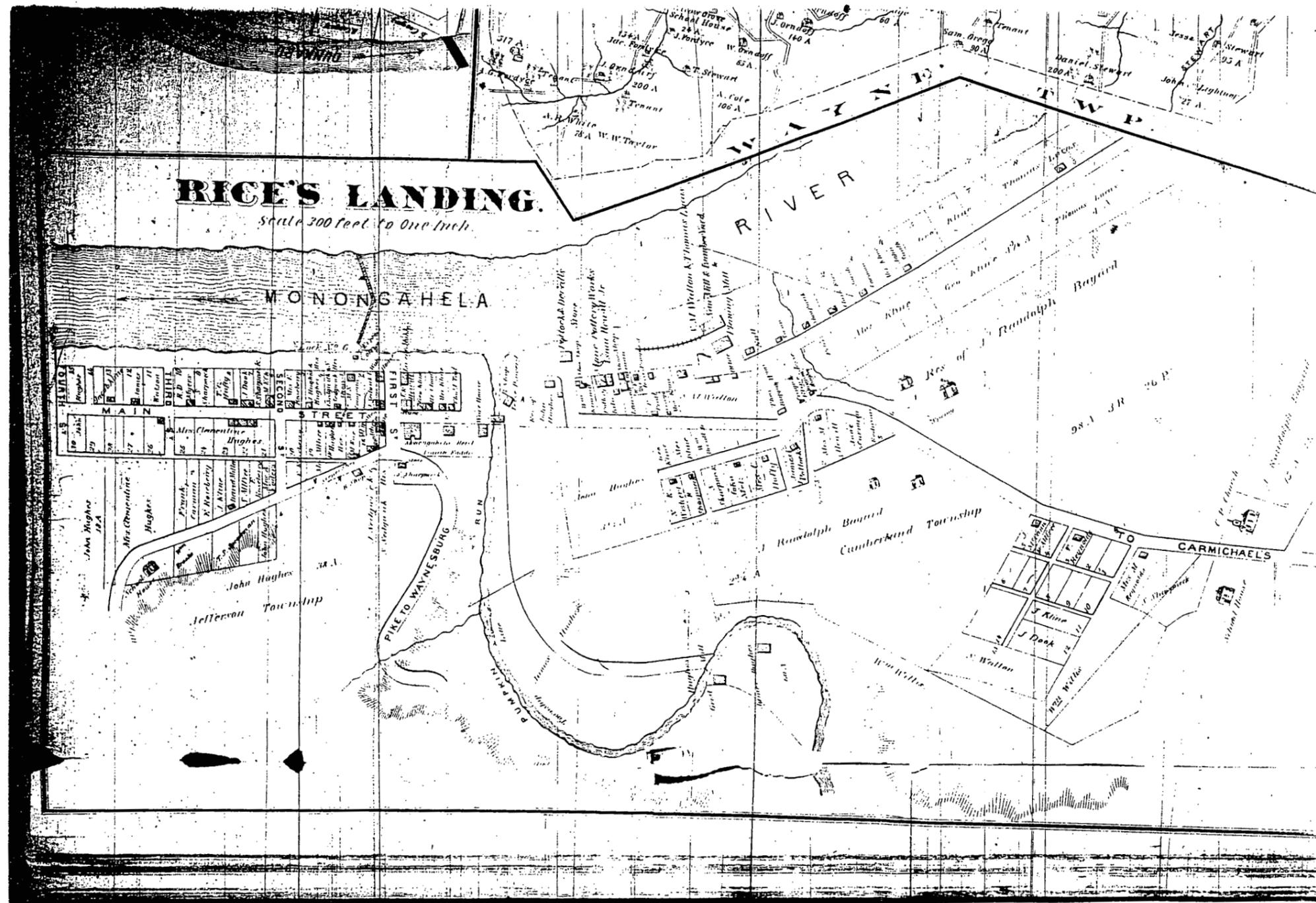
RICES LANDING IN 1876

From *Caldwell's Illustrated Historical Centennial Atlas of Greene County, Pennsylvania*, Published by J.A. Caldwell in Condit, Ohio in 1876.

This project was financed (in part) by a Grant from the Small Communities Planning Assistance Program through the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Department of Community Affairs.

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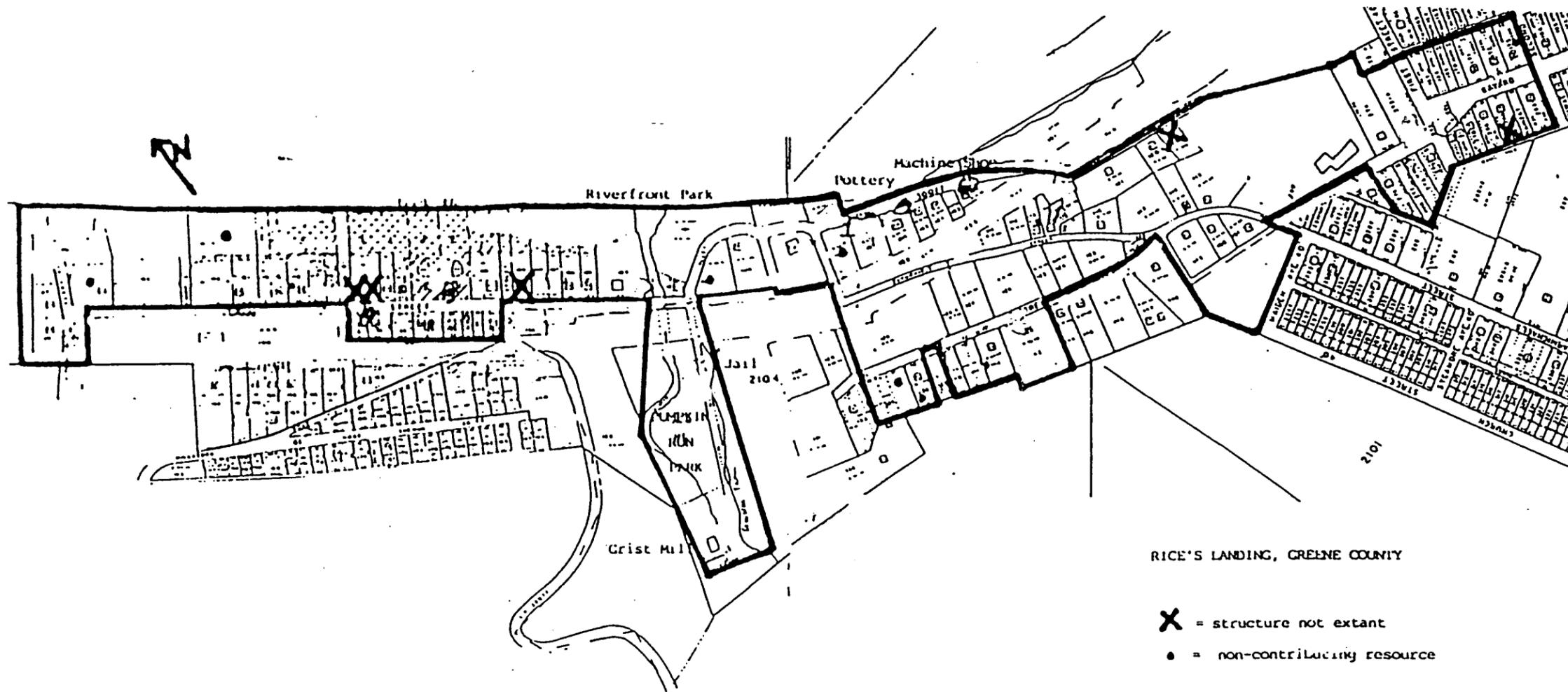
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RICES LANDING BOROUGH Comprehensive Plan Greene County

RICES LANDING HISTORIC DISTRICT

Boundary of the Rice's Landing
Historic District, listed on the National
Register of Historic Places on
December 24, 1992



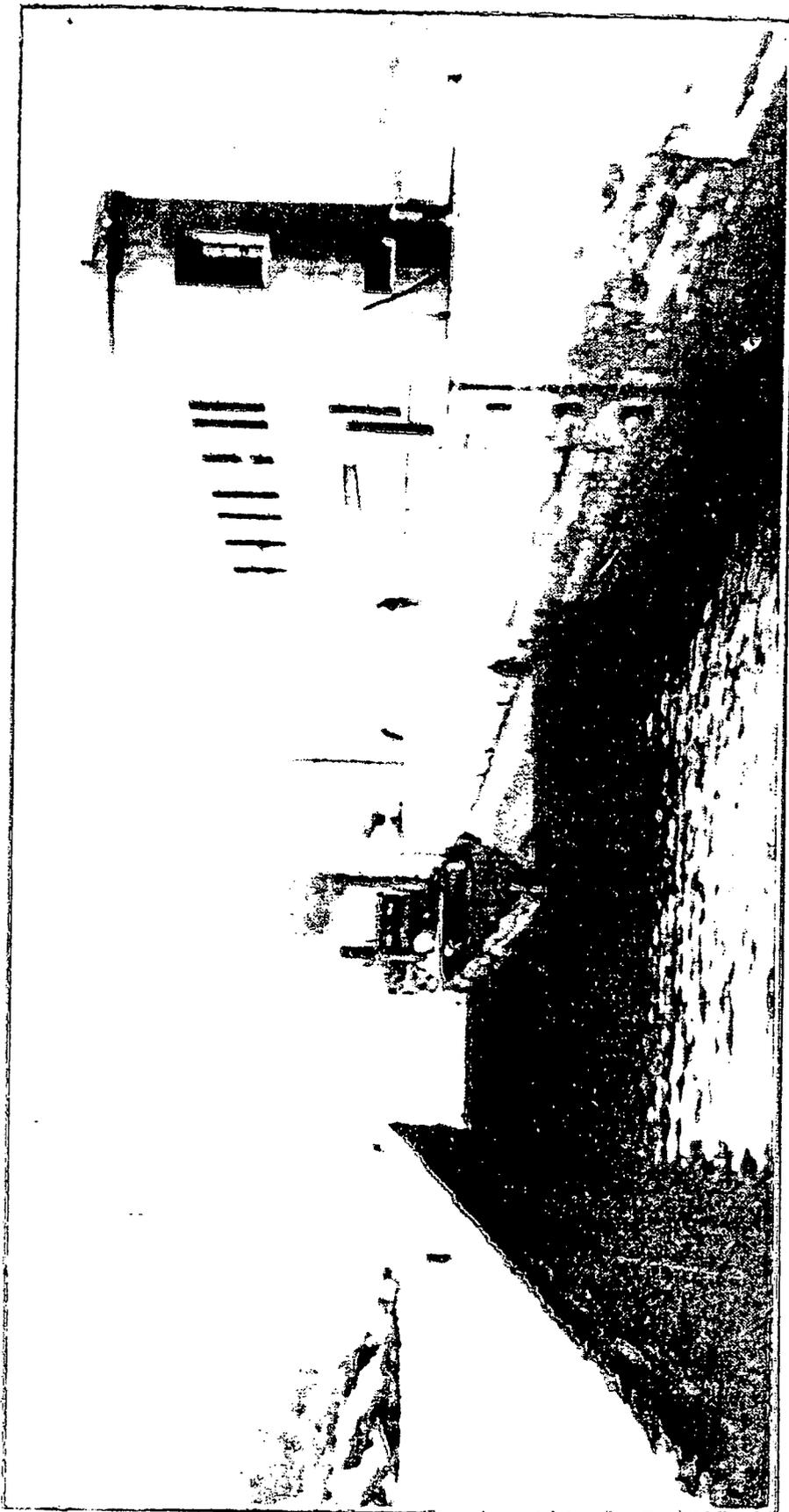
RICE'S LANDING, GREENE COUNTY

- X = structure not extant
- = non-contributing resource

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A coal barge passing through Lock No. 6 on the Monongahela River at Rice's Landing, c. 1932.
(From: Stone, Ralph W. *Geology and Mineral Resources of Greene County, Pennsylvania*. Harrisburg:
Pennsylvania Geological Survey, Fourth Series, Bulletin C.2, 1932.)