

VILLAGE of PHILMONT

National Register

of

Historic Places

Historic District



MILESTONE HERITAGE CONSULTING

Cultural Resource Management and Public History services for historic engineering, industrial and transportation resources for public agencies, private developers and the tourism industry

Cultural Resource Management:

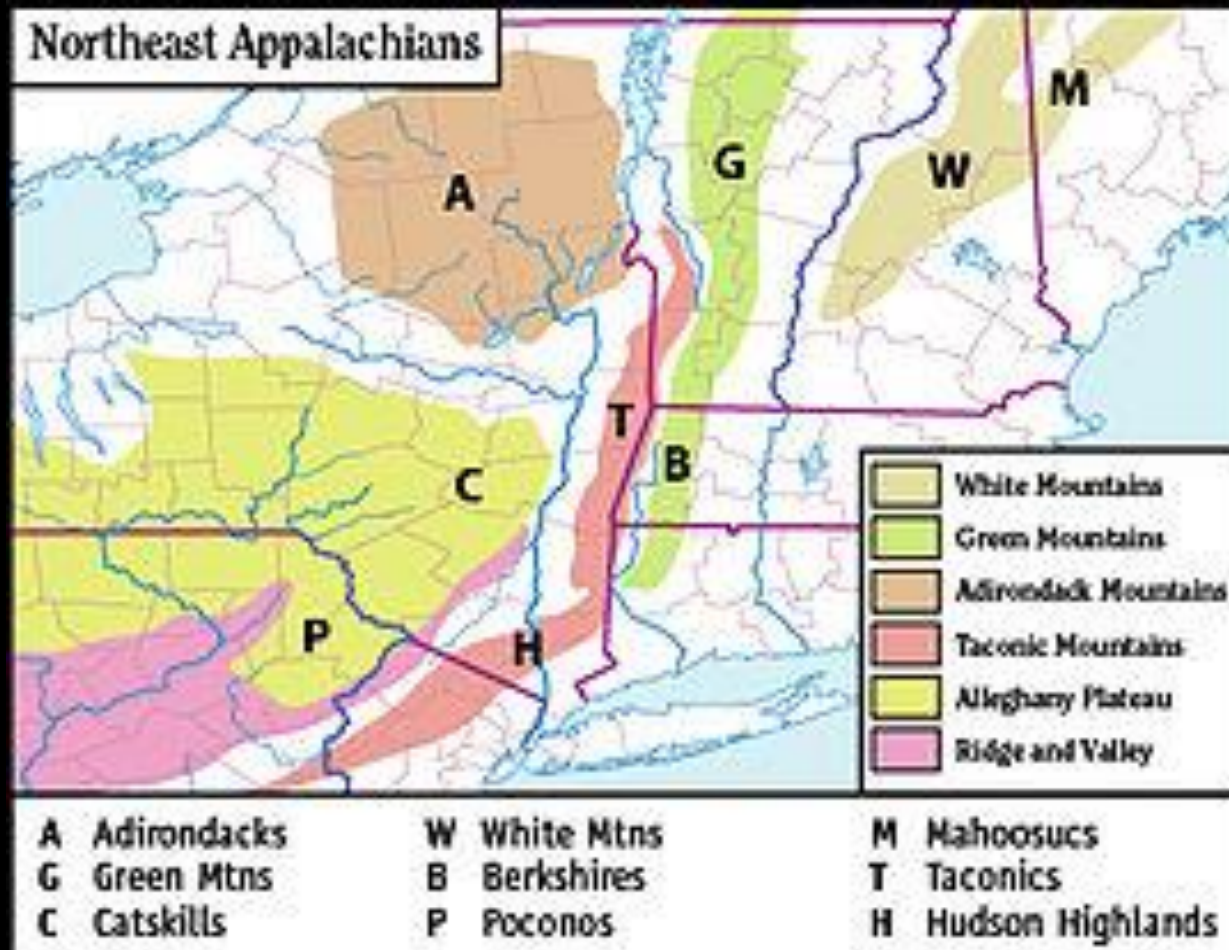
**Historical Survey • Identification
Evaluation • Mitigation
Documentation: HABS/HAER &
state-level, written & photographic
Photography: Digital & film
including large-format view camera**

Public History:

**Education & Interpretation:
Publications, exhibits &
interpretive signage systems
for historic sites, museums,
parks & trails**

Geology > Topography > Land Use

Chatham Fault separates High and Low Taconics at fall line > mill “privileges”



Falls = Mill Privileges > Dams > Waterpower



HISTORICAL CONTEXT

- **Late 1700s, small grist, saw and fulling mills are widespread in the region**
- **Early 1800s mill growth spurt for self-sufficiency in wake of Napoleonic Wars**
- **By 1820, 10 gristmills & eight sawmills in Claverack, most of any Columbia County town**
- **Early 1800s “Sheep Craze” drives regional woolen mill industry growth**

By Civil War, large textile, paper, etc. mills at largest water power sites including Stockport, Stottville, Stuyvesant Falls, Valatie, etc.



No. 4 Mill, Stottville, N.Y.



MILLS OF THE FRISBIE MFG. CO., STUYVESANT FALLS, N. Y.



HARDER MILL NO. 2,
VALATIE, N.Y.

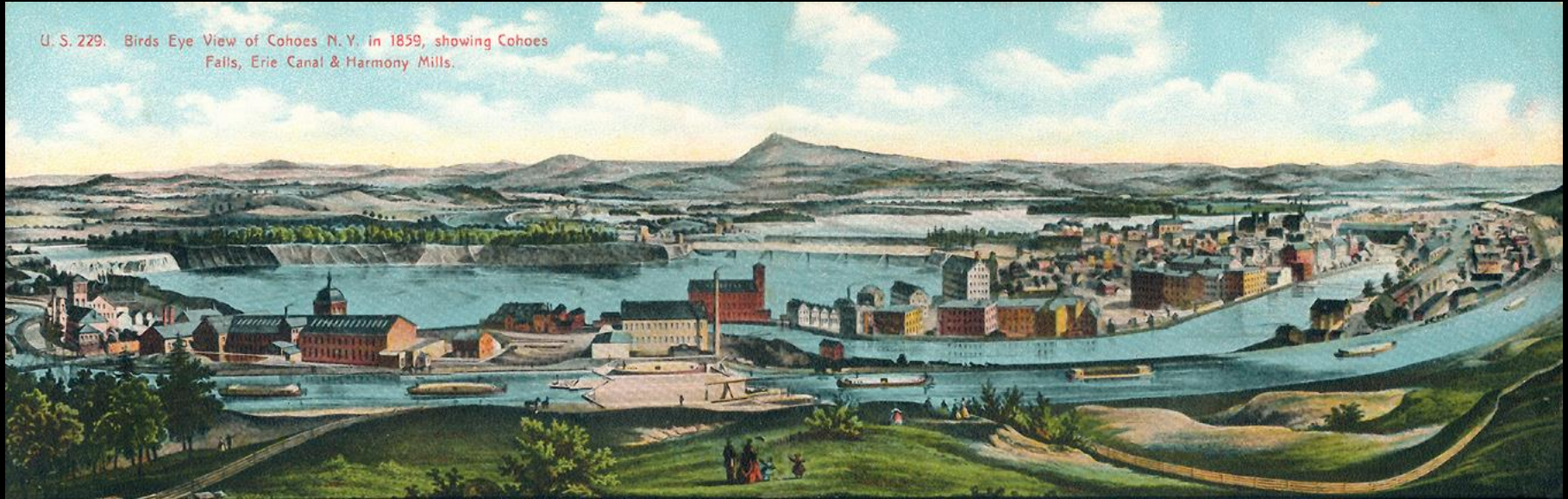


Greetings from Aunt Mary
to my nephew Wm R. Howard at cottage

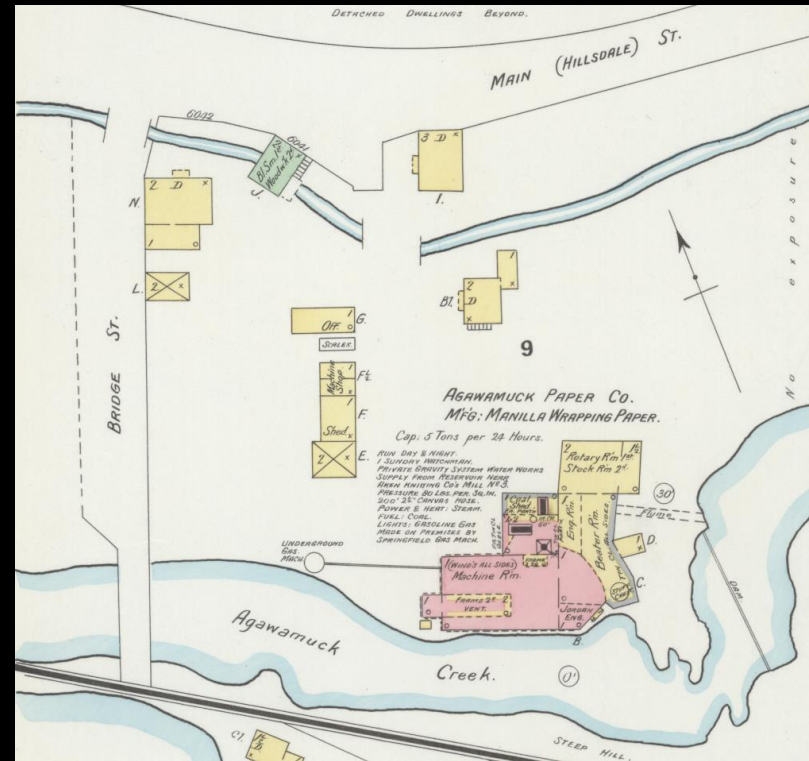
Stockport, N.Y.

New York knitting industry started in Cohoes 1832; after 1850s machinery improvements, industry spread to Mohawk & Hudson valleys

U. S. 229. Birds Eye View of Cohoes N. Y. in 1859, showing Cohoes Falls, Erie Canal & Harmony Mills.



Early Philmont-Area Mill Site: 1798 George Philip fulling mill



**In 1849, site of first Philmont-
area paper mill, later Rogers
paper mill**



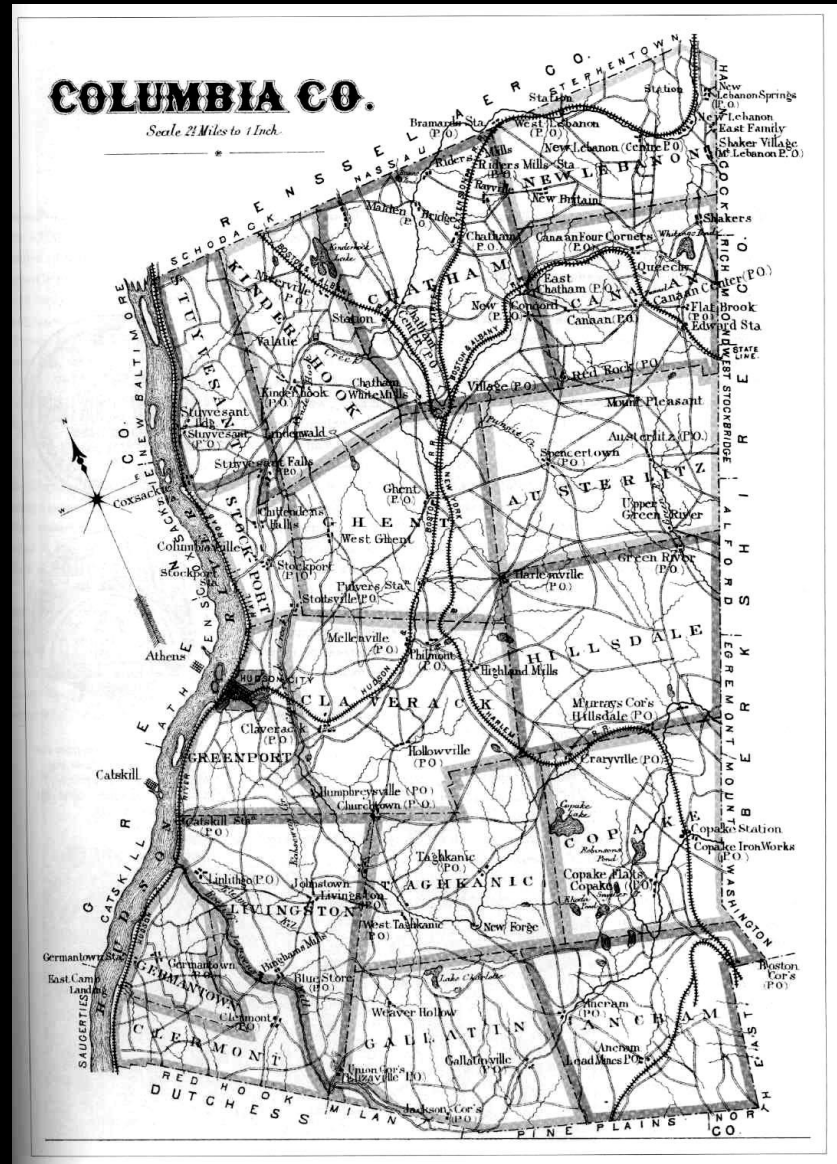
PHILMONT'S RAILROADS

EARLY & STRATEGIC

1838: Hudson & Berkshire Railroad, an east-west route connecting to Hudson River boat and rail trade at Hudson, NY. Ran through Mellenville west and below most mills.

1852: New York & Harlem Railroad, a north-south route to NYC located east and above mills (soon to be part of Harlem Valley Rail Trail).

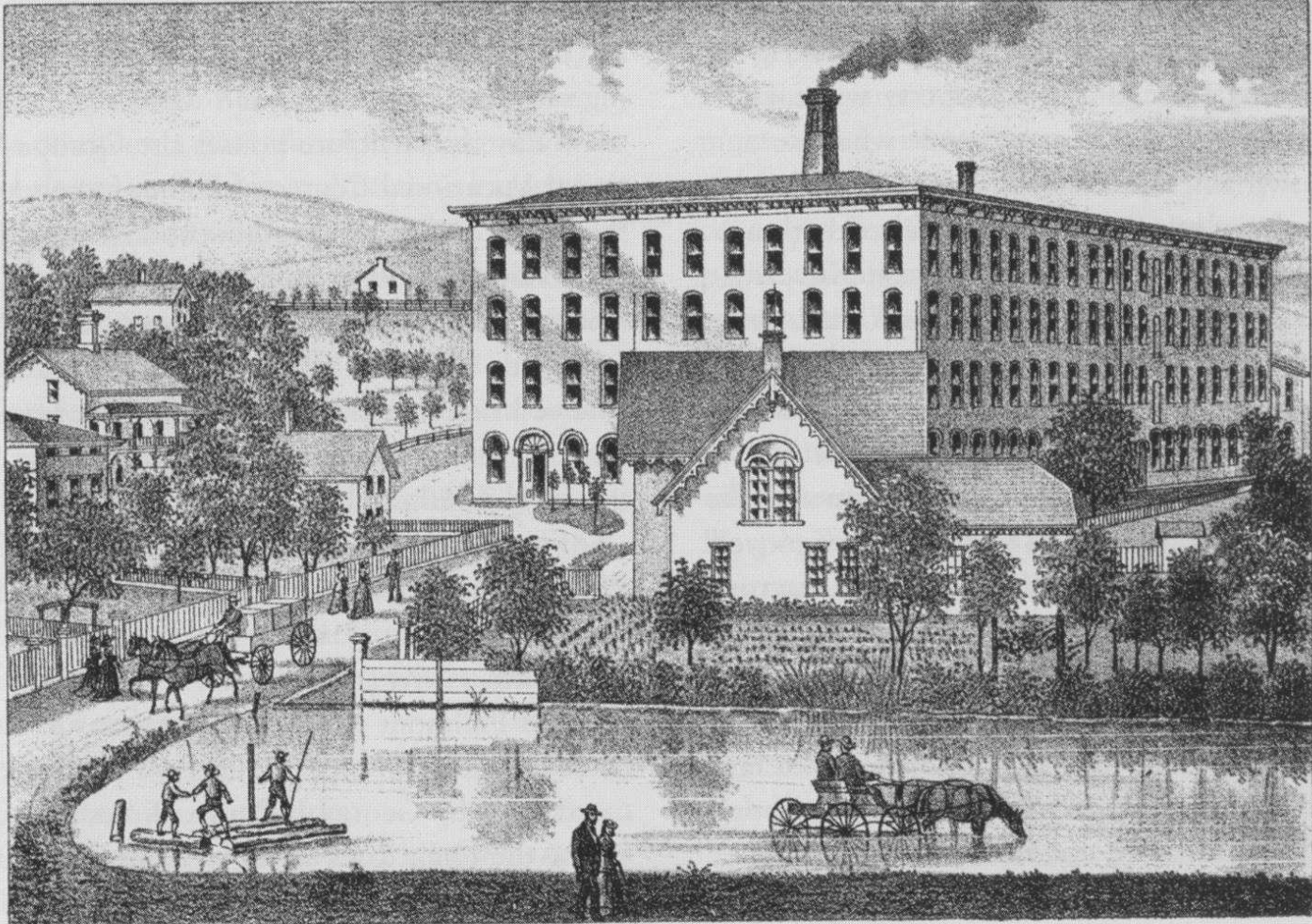
Both connected to Boston & Albany Railroad to the north



PHILMONT MILLS

- **1845: George Philip began the “most ambitious waterpower development in Columbia County” on what became “Factory Hill,” later “Philips Mountain,” then after the coming of the railroad, “Philmont”**
- **Built 2,000 ft power canal, and five mill privileges with 30-50 ft of head each**
- **Built his own woolen and paper mills**
- **Leased mill privileges to others**
- **Controlled water rights and coordinated water flow and usage**

1862: Nelson Aken built a knitting mill at a sixth privilege; their Civil War Union Army contracts were the most valuable in Columbia County

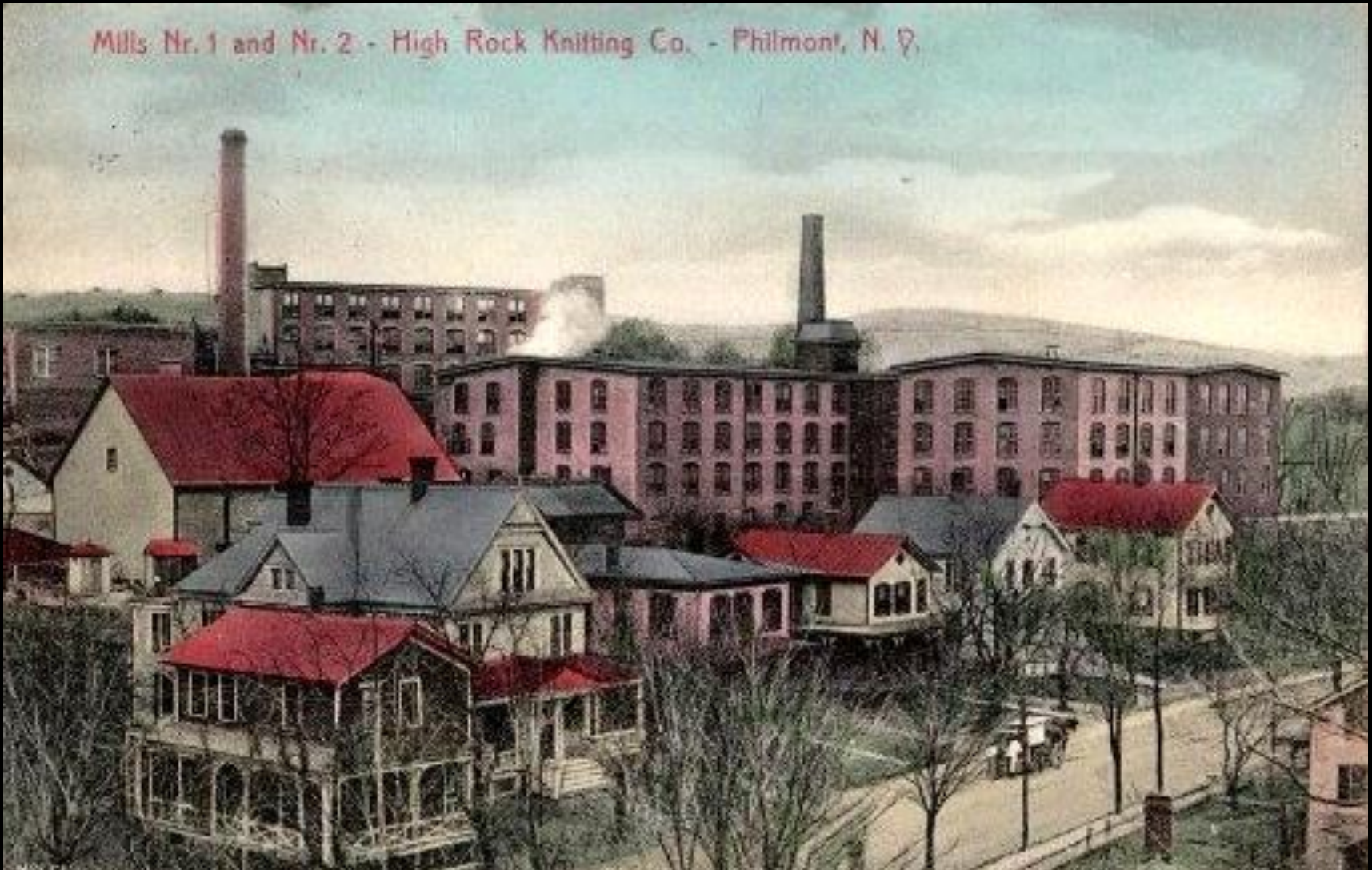


"UPPER HOSEYRY MILLS," NELSON P. AKEN, PROPRIETOR, PHILMONT, COLUMBIA CO., N. Y.

PHILMONT MILLS

- **1873: Philmont population was 3,671, 2/3 of all of Claverack's**
- **1892: Philmont incorporated. Knitting mills making undergarments & hosiery employed 1,025, a larger workforce than any other Columbia County town**
- **Philmont was a "Company Town," with mill companies providing civic infrastructure and services**

1912: Major textile mills consolidated under the High Rock Knitting Co.; Lockwood & Greene Engineering Co. built the massive Mill No. 2. The High Rock Co. employed 870 workers, the most of any business in Columbia County



PHILMONT MILLS

- 1920s: High Rock paid 2/3 of Philmont taxes
- 1930s-1950s: Depression, decline and diversification
- 1963: last High Rock Company mill closed

For *real* comfort

perfect fit and durability—buy only the underwear with this trade mark in RED



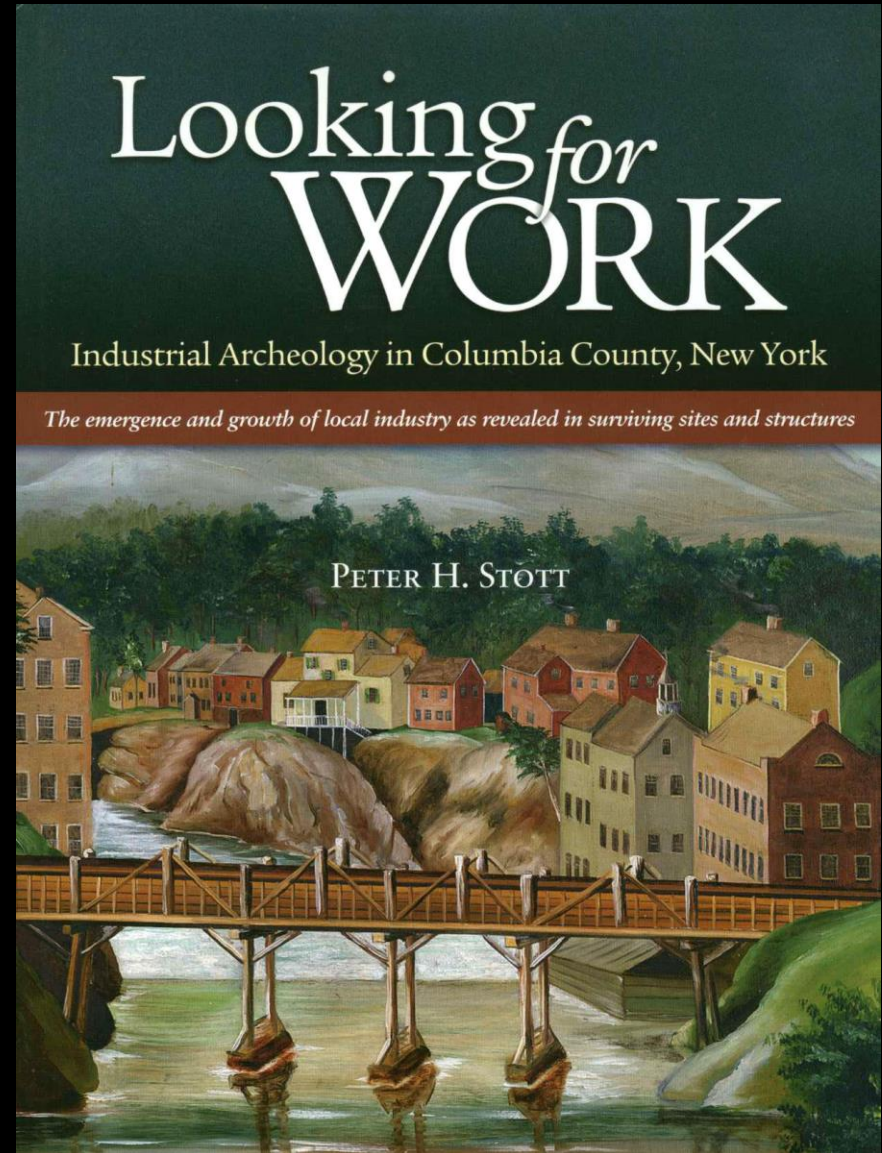
WE SELL IT—

HIGH-ROCK
Fleece-Lined
Underwear

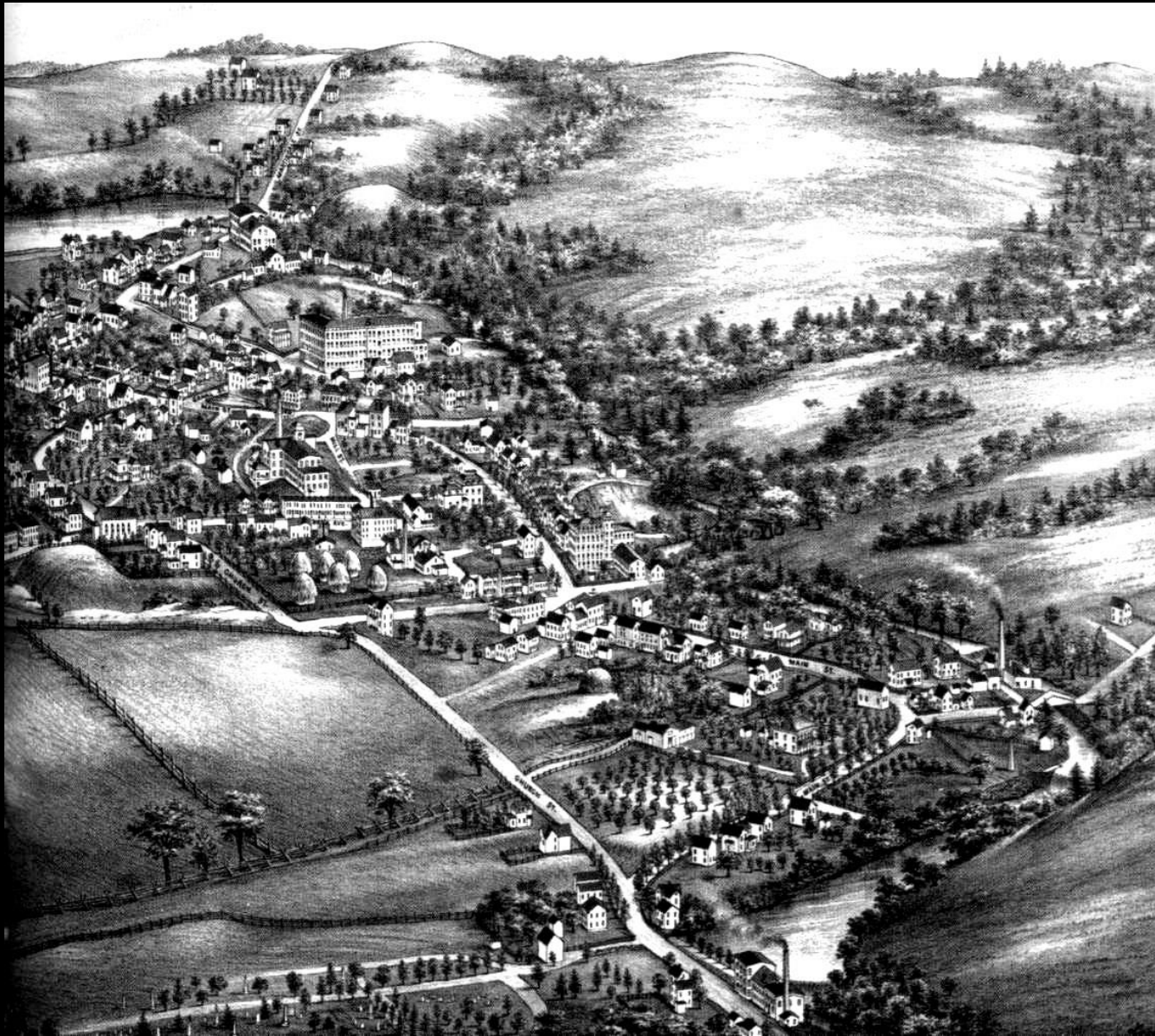
Union Suits, Shirts and Drawers

Peter Stott:

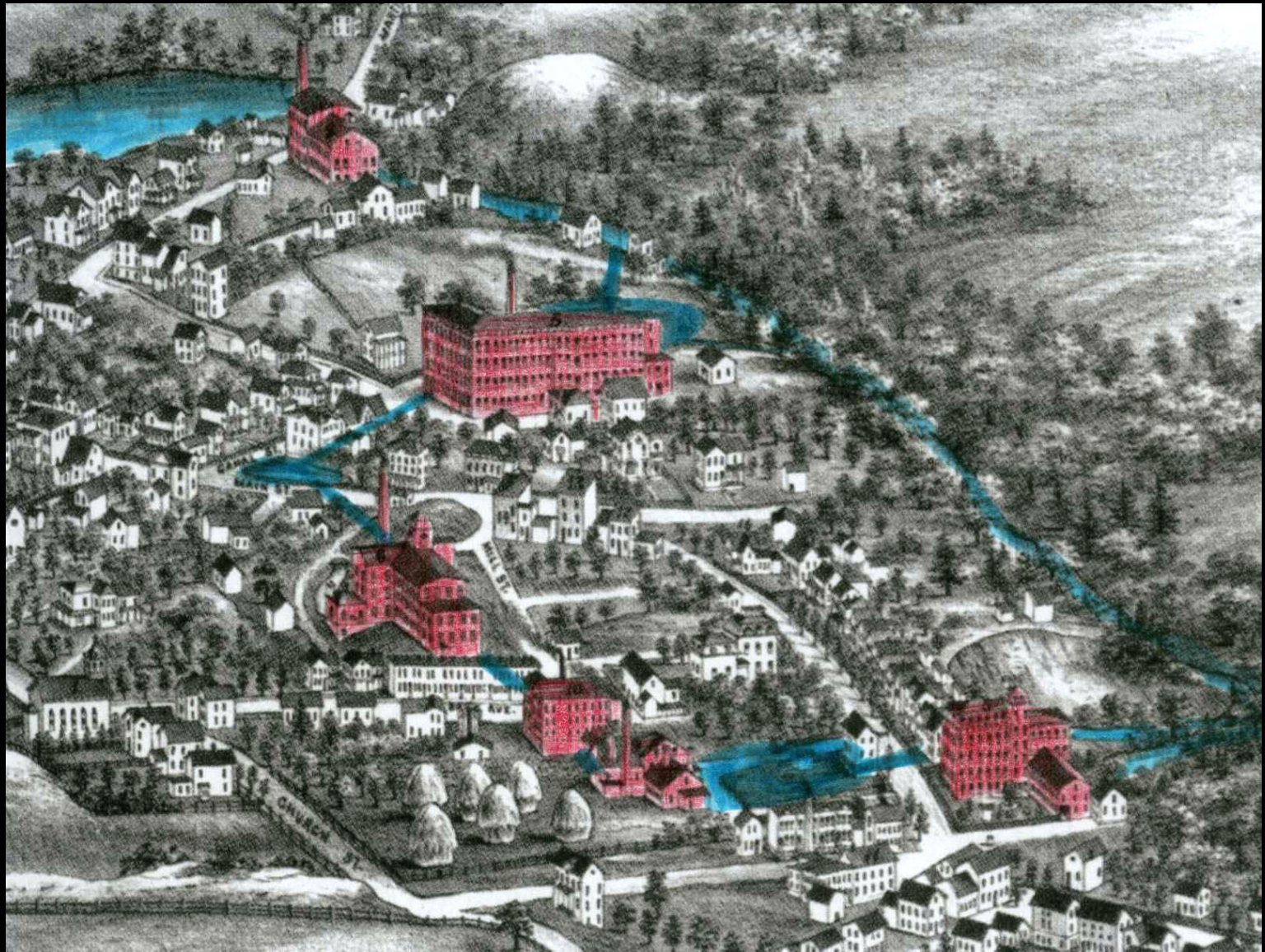
***Looking for
Work:
Industrial
Archeology in
Columbia
County, New
York***



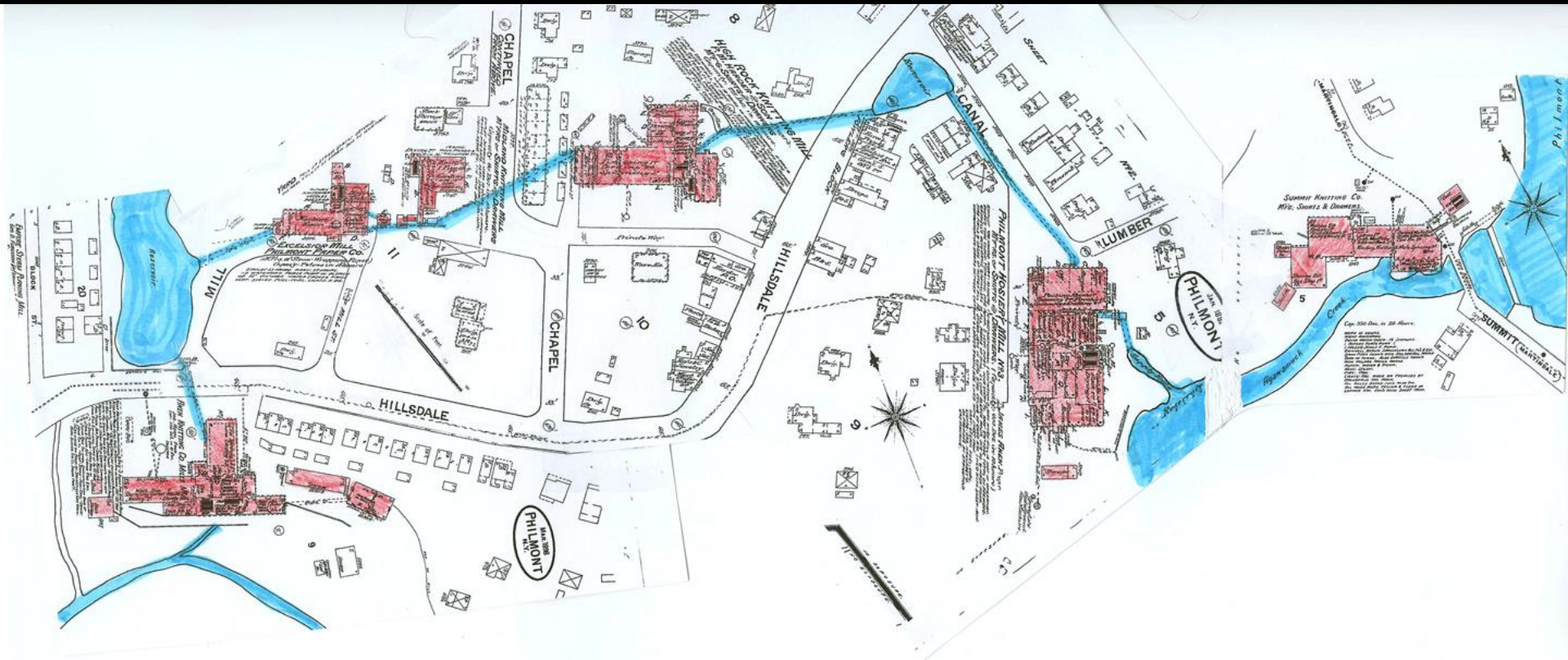
1881 Rowley Atlas



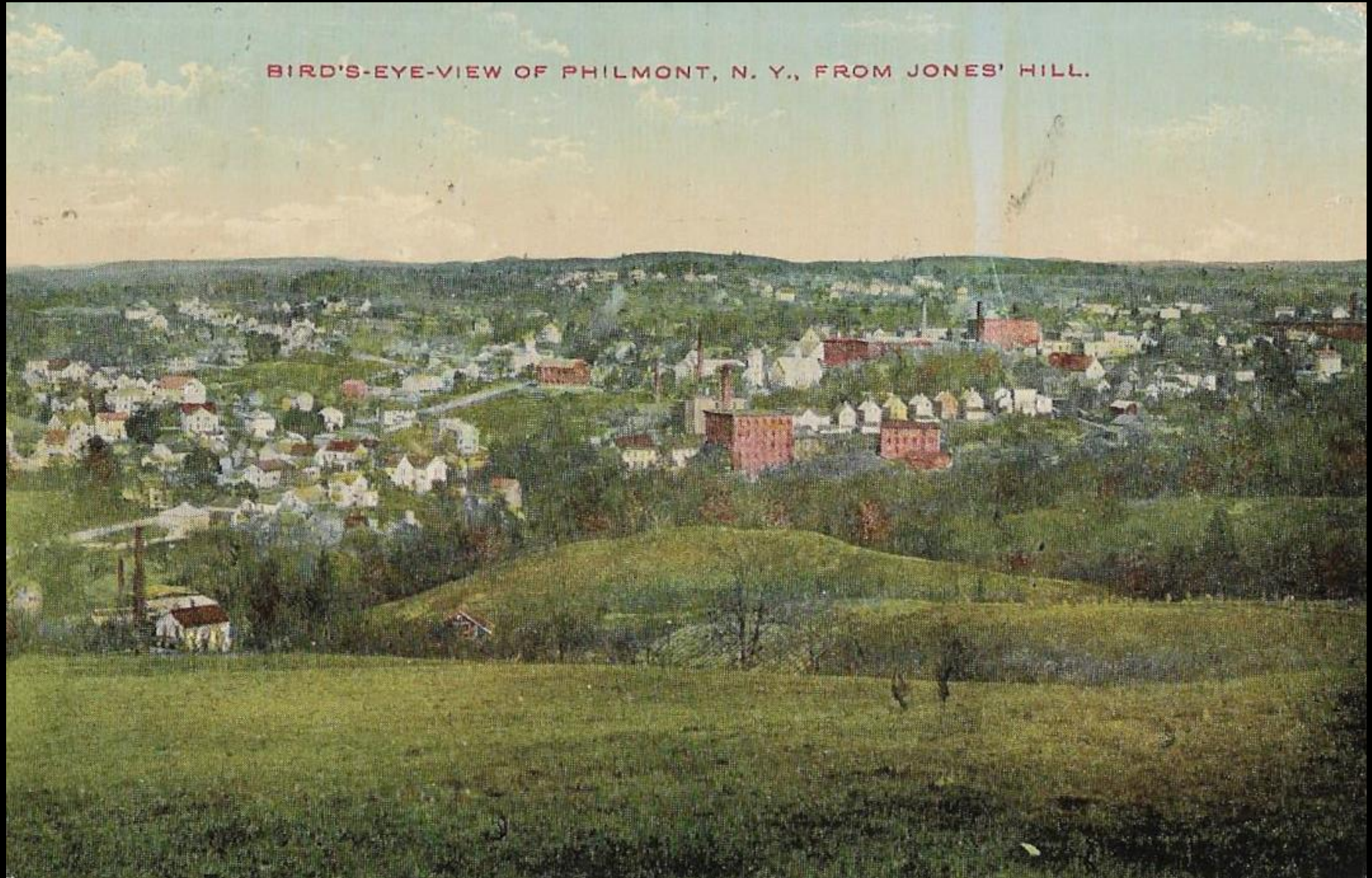
Philip Waterpower System



Sanborn Fire Insurance Map



The Machine in the Garden: A Rural Mill Town



A Rural Boomtown!



Midland Knitting Mill and flume & turbine remains

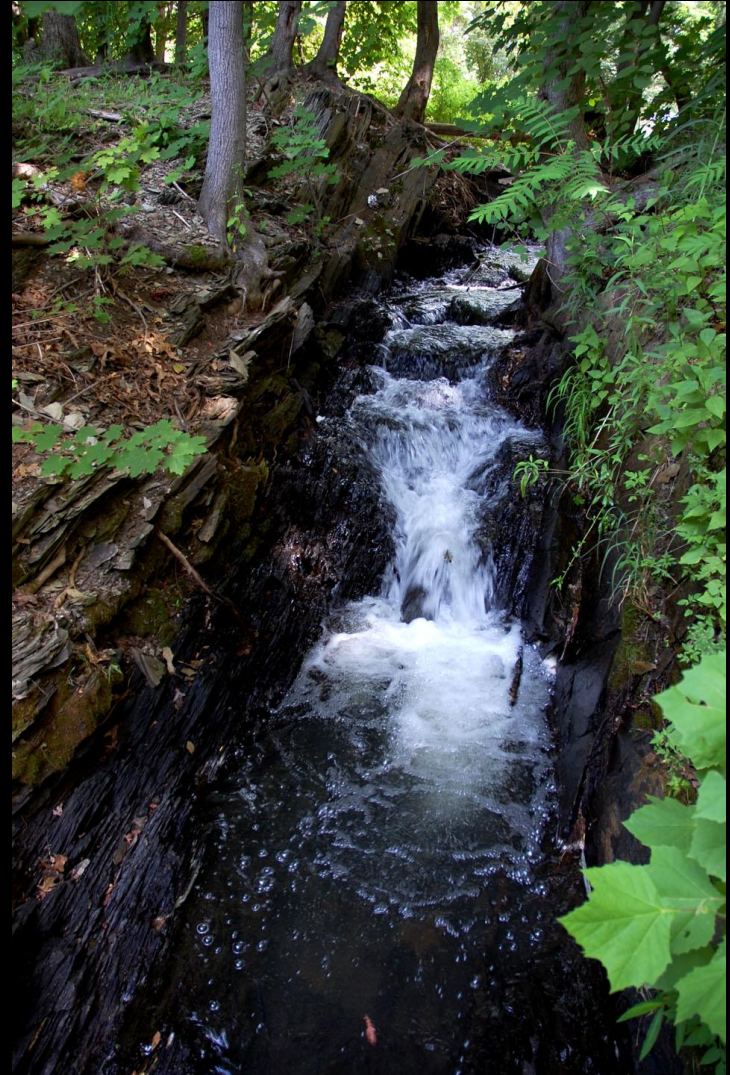


Aken Knitting Mill No. 3

Storehouses



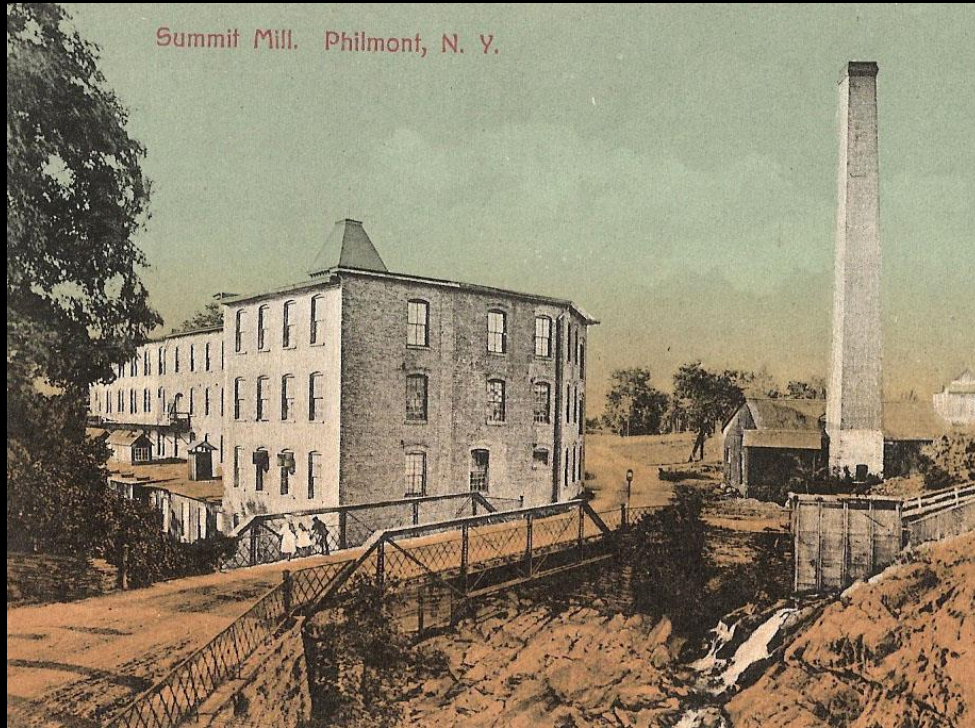
Philip's mill raceways: hewn from slate bedrock



Agawamuck Creek Gorge Dam



Philmont Mills Survivor: 1876 Summit Mill



Summit Mill Site History

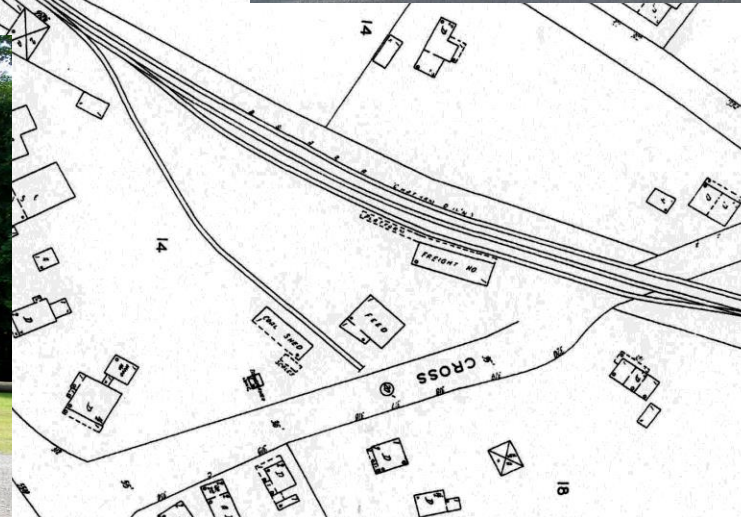
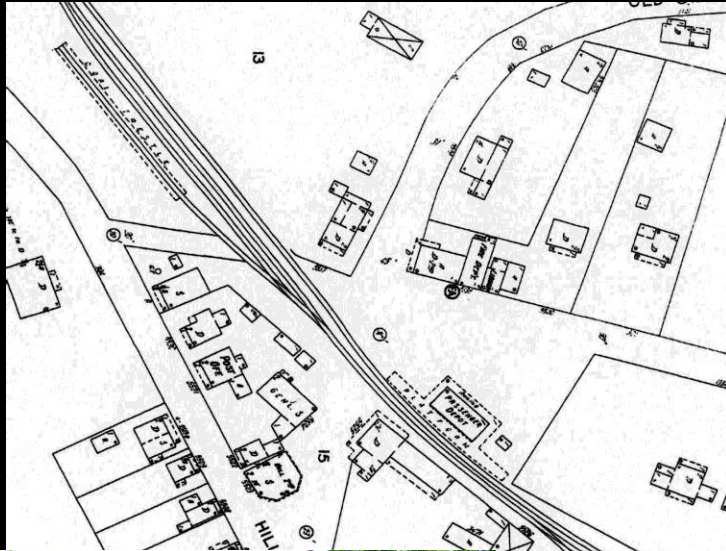
- **1850s: Philip's grandson George W. made carpets at this site, giving village name of "Factory Hill"**
- **Civil War: earlier "Ockawamick Mill" made Union Army knit goods, mill later burned**
- **1876: Current building construction began**
- **1885: became Summit Knitting, 3rd biggest Philmont employer, made 200 dozen shirts in 10-hour day**
- **1880s-90s: expansion including 5-story stair tower with half million gallon water tank**
- **Later owned by Aken, High Rock Mills**

Summit Mill



“The Summit Knitting Mill is today one of best preserved textile mills in Columbia County.” **Peter Stott, *Looking for Work***

Transportation: Mellenville Railroad Station and Freight House



Architecture: Commercial



**Main
Street**



Architecture: Worker Housing



**Tenements
and
Row Houses**



Architecture: Worker Housing



**Surviving
shared
sheds**

Architecture: Worker Housing

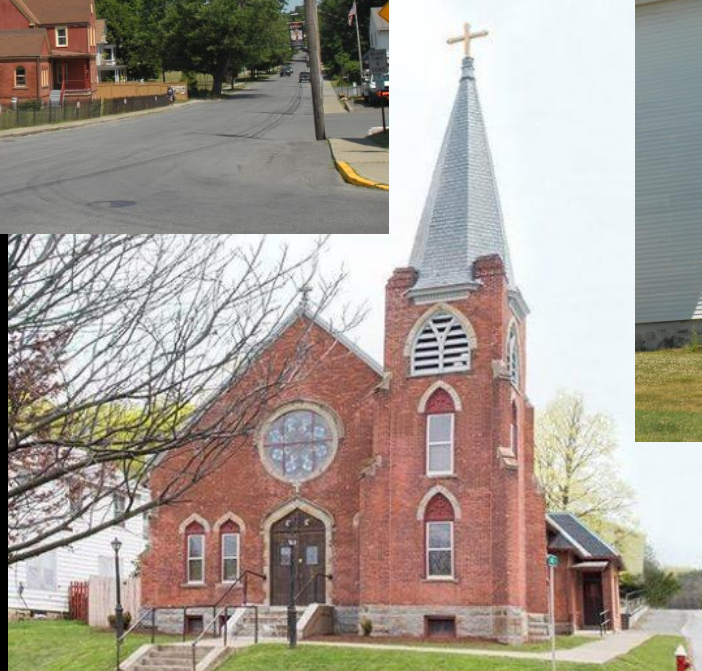


**Freestanding
and
Duplex**

Architecture: Fine Homes



Architecture: Churches





Hopkins House Hotel



FIRST NATIONAL BANK, PHILMONT, N.Y.

First National Bank





Empire House Hotel



Opportunity: Heritage Tourism



**There are people
who seek these
kinds of
destinations out!**

Opportunity: Interpretive Trails

Industrial waterways, rail corridors, etc. are linear industrial archaeological districts—cultural landscapes—and Heritage Tourism assets!



Interpretation enriches our appreciation and experience of place

“Comin’ round the bend:”



HARLEM DIVISION HISTORY

THE HARLEM VALLEY RAIL TRAIL follows the route of the New York & Harlem Railroad, a 127-mile line between New York City and Chatham, New York. Incorporated in 1831 as a horse-drawn Manhattan street railway, the NY&H was one of the earliest US railroads. Its founders' goal was to reach the Erie Canal and railroads linking Boston and Buffalo via Albany. Construction passed through what became known as the "Harlem Valley" and reached Chatham in 1852, connecting with railroads to Albany, Massachusetts, and soon after Vermont. The NY&H competed with the parallel Hudson River Railroad, owned by rail baron Cornelius Vanderbilt, who absorbed the NY&H into his New York Central Railroad empire linking New York City, Chicago, and St. Louis in 1873. The NY&H then became the NYCRR's Harlem Division, the name longest associated with the line. Penn Central took over in 1968, naming it the "Harlem Line," now associated with Metro-North Railroad commuter service.

The Harlem Division was a gateway to the outside world for the towns it served. Passenger depots were centers of community life, connected to places near and far, where people came and went, received and sent packages, got their

FROM RAIL TO TRAIL

world news, and shared local gossip. The US Mail moved by Railway Post Office cars, and before the telephone, station agents provided rapid communication via Western Union Telegraph service.

After World War II, US railroad service and revenues declined with increasing competition with airlines, and automobiles and trucks using new roads, including the growing Eisenhower Interstate Highway system. In 1968, the New York Central merged with the Pennsylvania Railroad, forming Penn Central, which soon went bankrupt. Penn Central cut passenger service back to Dover Plains in 1972 and ended freight trains to Chatham in 1976.

In 1989, New York State acquired 21 miles of the line—north of Wassaic for public nonmotorized recreational trail use. The first segment of the Harlem Valley Rail Trail, maintained and operated by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation and the Harlem Valley Rail Trail Association, opened in 1996. Metro-North Railroad restored service to Wassaic in 2000, connecting passengers with one of the most scenic rail trails in eastern New York.

THE HARLEM DIVISION

NY State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation



PASSENGER LINE This postcard showing people meeting a steam locomotive-driven train at the Crotonville Depot captures the spirit of late nineteenth-century rural Harlem Division passenger service. Harlem Division trains carried a wide variety of passengers: local town shoppers, schoolchildren, New York City business commuters, travelers connecting with trains at Chatham, and tourists heading for all-season recreational destinations. Today, Metro-North Railroad passenger service from New York City ends in Amenia at Wassaic, at the south terminus for the Harlem Valley Rail Trail. Source: Mike Fallon / Copake Ancient House



FREIGHT HAULER Harlem Division freight trains moved a variety of raw materials and finished goods between rural and urban producers and consumers and interchanged freight with several connecting railroads. Although the Harlem Valley is known today for its bosonic agricultural landscapes, it once hosted busy industries, including several ironworks. The railroad shipped local iron ore, charcoal fuel, and limestone flux to blast furnace plants at Copake Falls, Thorne, Millerton, and Wassaic, and delivered iron piglets to foundries and finished cast-iron products to market. At Hardscra just north of Millerton, the Harlem Division tracks ran under the bridge feeding raw materials to the Millerton Iron Company's Blast Furnace, shown here in 1886. Source: Salsbury Association Collection



HARLEM DIVISION, 1966 timetable map of Harlem Division stations, branches and connections. Source: Pawling Historical Society



MILK MOVER The Harlem Division was a vital agricultural artery feeding a constant flow of milk, dairy products, meat, and produce—and ice to cool it all—in New York City for a century. Cold storage established its first New York Consolidated Milk Company processing plant on the flat at Wassaic in 1861. Dairy farmers brought fresh milk to processing plants located along the Harlem Division like this Boulder creamery at Ghent. Harlem Division trains shipped cold milk to New York City in special cars cooled with ice from area ponds. Harlem Division milk trains included a dedicated nighty fast train from Ogdensburg, New York, via a connection with the Rutland Railroad at Chatham. Source: Town of Ghent Historical Archive



SCENIC ROUTE The Harlem Valley Rail Trail runs through the Harlem Valley, named after the New York & Harlem Railroad. Known for its scenic beauty, the trail follows the Escarpment for part of its length and passes through quiet villages with views of rolling farmland, woods, and wetlands. The Harlem Valley's camps, hills, lakes, and resorts once offered year-round recreational opportunities reached by the Harlem Division. Today, the rail trail continues the Harlem Division's tradition as a scenic transportation corridor and is a major regional recreational destination. Source: Mike Fallon / Copake Ancient House

NY State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

The Harlem Valley Rail Trail

Opportunities: **Historic Preservation**

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC
PLACES LISTING >**

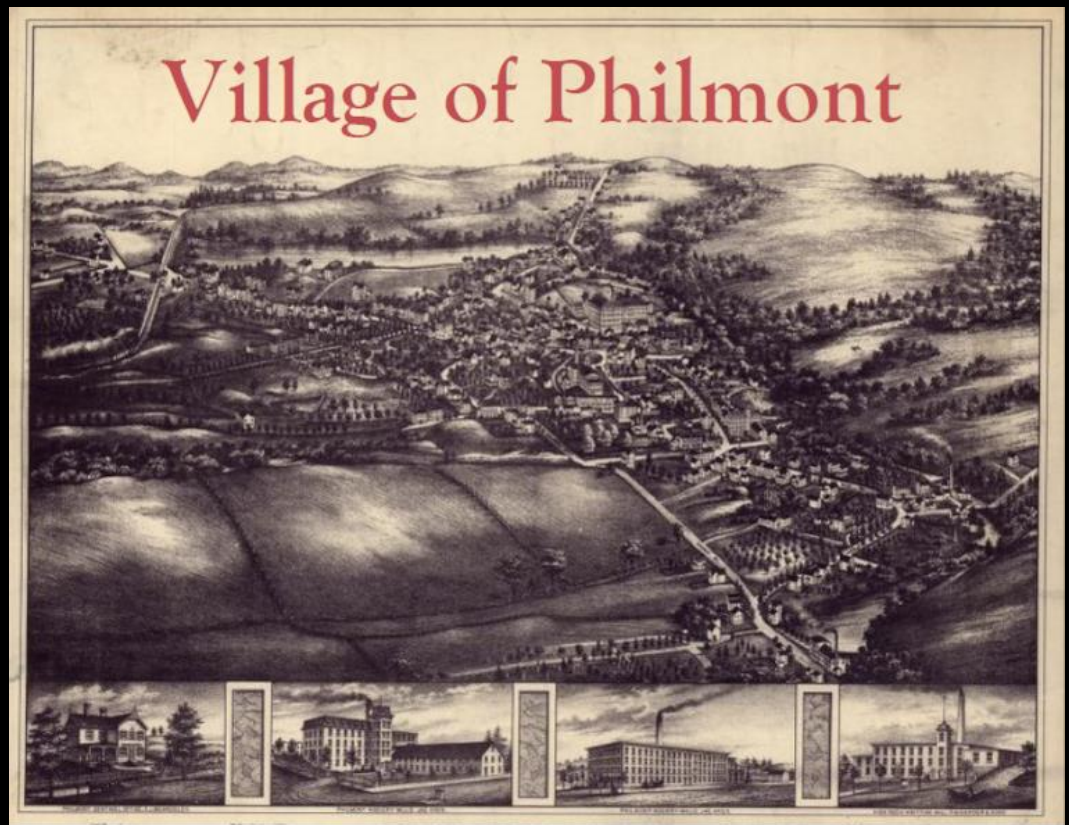
**NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC
DISTRICT >**

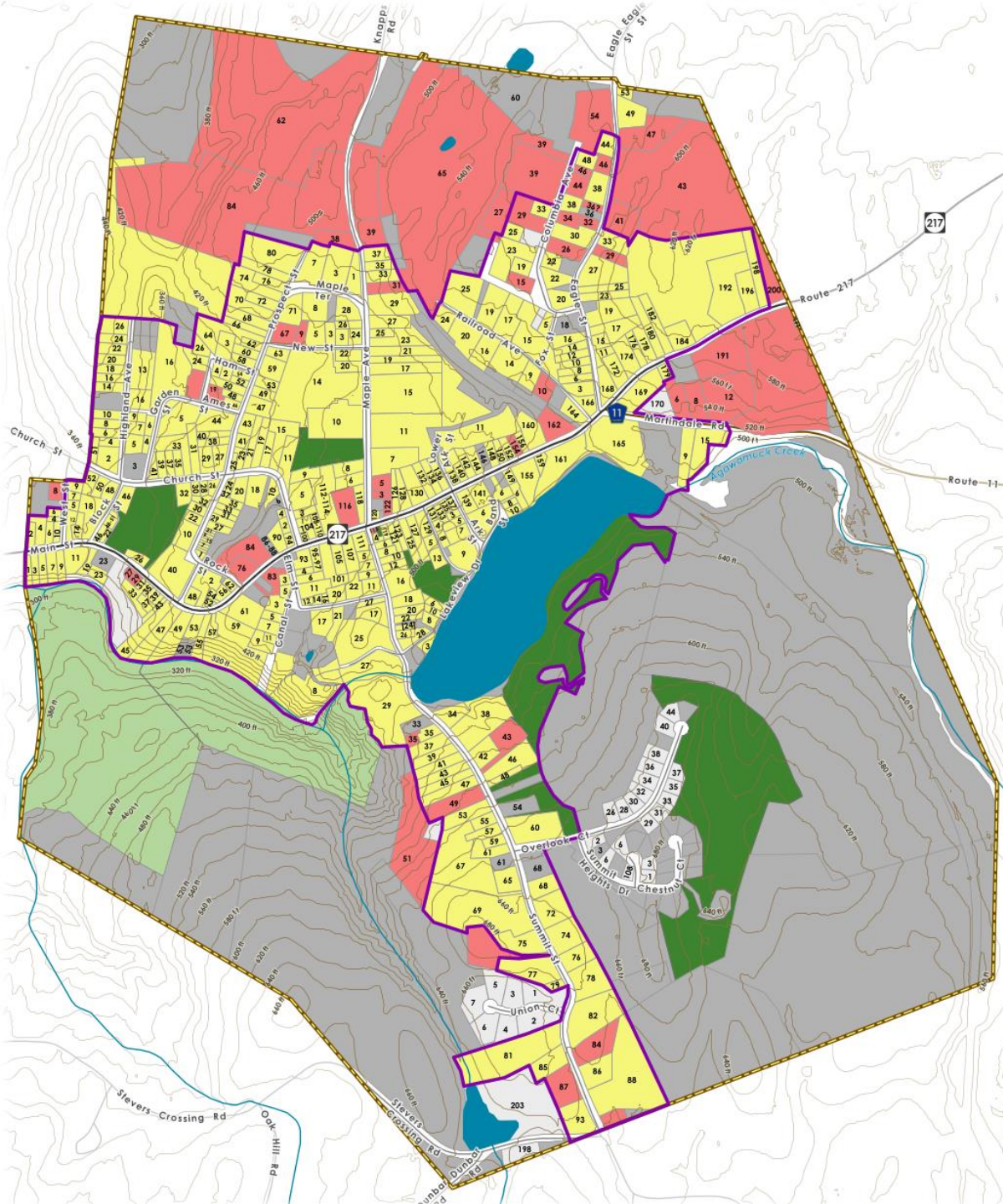
REHABILITATION TAX CREDITS

2021

**Jessie
Ravage**

**Philmont
Historical
Survey**





Proposed Philmont National Register Historic District:

Boundary Line

Ravage Survey Conclusions

“The Village of Philmont is a remarkably intact example of an upland industrial village in the Taconic Region of New York.”

“The Philmont Historic District is eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places under National Register Criteria A and C.”

NR Criterion A: Association with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history:

“The District is eligible under Criterion A in the area of Industry for its association with the growth and expansion of textile mills powered by Agawamuck Creek.”

NR Criterion C: Embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction, or that represent the work of a master, or that posses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components may lack individual distinction:

“The District is eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture as a representative example of an older mill hamlet that rapidly expanded into a factory village.”

NATIONAL REGISTER LISTING

**IS AN HONOR—THE PROPERTY MEETS
ACCEPTED CRITERIA OF HISTORICAL
SIGNIFICANCE AND INTEGRITY TO JOIN AN
OFFICIAL LIST OF SIGNIFICANT U.S. HISTORIC
RESOURCES. FOSTERS “PRIDE OF PLACE” AND
DESTINATION MAKING**

**PROVIDES REVIEW AND PROTECTION FROM
FEDERALLY-FUNDED PROJECTS AND
MITIGATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS**

**ENABLES HISTORIC PRESERVATION TAX
CREDITS FOR PROJECTS FOLLOWING THE
SECRETARY OF THE INTERIOR’S STANDARDS
FOR REHABILITATION**

“THERE IS A DIFFERENCE!”

A *NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT (NRHD)* IS NOT THE SAME THING AS A *LOCAL HISTORIC DISTRICT (LHD)*!

NRHD HAS NO CONSTRAINTS ON WHAT YOU CAN DO TO YOUR BUILDINGS OR LAND

LHD IS GOVERNED BY LOCAL ORDINANCE AND CAN CONSTRAIN WHAT YOU CAN DO TO YOUR BUILDINGS OR LAND

Historic Preservation Tax Credits

Listing in the National Register of Historic Places enables...

Federal and/or State Historic Preservation Tax Credits, which provide...

Tax breaks for owners of buildings improved according to the Secretary of the Interiors Standards for Rehabilitation

WHO IS ELIGIBLE?

Income-Producing Properties:

- **Residential (rental apartments, bed & breakfasts, etc.)**
- **Commercial (retail, food, entertainment, etc.)**
- **Industrial (manufacturing, power generation, etc.)**
- **For-profit institutional (museums, etc.)**
- **Mixed-Use (above or other)**

Non-Income-Producing Properties:

- **Residential Homeowner Tax Credit**

HOW DOES IT WORK?

IT'S ESSENTIALLY A SIMPLE CONTRACT WITH THE IRS

Retain a Preservation Consultant, Restoration Architect, and Tax Credit Attorney and CPA

APPLICATION PART 1: Certifies property is or soon will be National Register-listed and briefly presents Existing Conditions and plans. Approval by NY OPRHP (SHPO) and US NPS; Usually a formality

APPLICATION PART 2: Documents Existing Conditions of all building elements and presents all Proposed Work through written and photographic documentation and architectural drawings. Actual work follows OPRHP/NPS review and approval. Work must follow Secretary of the Interior's *Standards for Rehabilitation* and technical guidance bulletins and briefs, and OPRHP/NPS conditions. Changes must be reported via filing Part 2 Amendments.

APPLICATION PART 3: Documents Completed Work through photographs, and is reviewed for adherence with PART 2 by OPRHP/NPS.

APPROVAL= Property Tax break on cost of project Qualifying Rehabilitation Expenditures (QREs)

Ravage Report Conclusions

“Philmont’s architectural resources...might be viewed as assets.”

“Historic District documentation can enhance planning efforts...”

“A National Register District would provide opportunity to local property owners to take advantage of incentives at the state and federal levels for rehabilitation of listed properties.”

“The village could benefit from a district nomination as the community is increasingly engaged in improving many aspects of living in Philmont.”

The End



...part of a new Beginning?!

Q&A Time



Matt Kierstead



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Industrial History

Public Interpretation

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