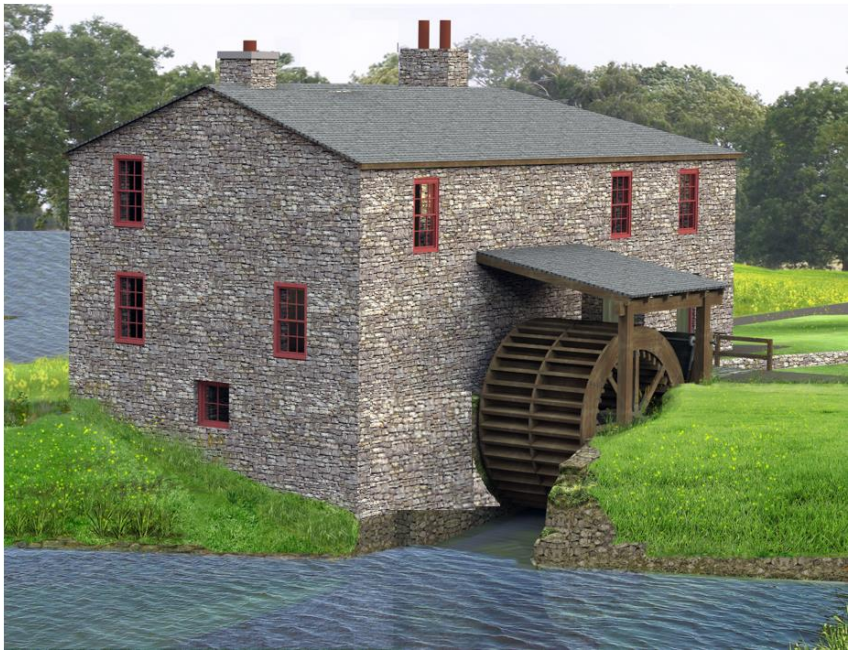
1822 Robeson Rolling Mill Illustration



Based on Fredrick Graff's 1823 drawings of the waterwheel, melded with current pictures, aerial videos, and engineers' measurements of the Mill, computer-aided design (CAD) illustrations of the mill c. 1820 were created.

On the right, viewed from the east side of Wissahickon Creek, as if on Kelly Drive, the mill wheel had a shed over it to protect it (the shed's existence is known from an 1827 Schuylkill Navigation map).

Below is the mill viewed from an overhead northern perspective with the Schuylkill River in the background. Not illustrated here but known from an 1835 map, there was a "mill pond" where there is now a parking area, and the Mill's "head race" then carried the water under a small bridge to the "center-shot" waterwheel.



The mill was built by 1690, and 1st used to mill corn. A sawmill was built at the same time, lying south of but next to 'Ridge Road.'

Based on the 1820 United States Census Manufacturing Schedule, the mill was part of "The Roxborough Works consisting of three mill Rolling & Slitting Mill & Nail Factory" complex.

Details included "Annually consumed: Bar Iron 135 Tons, Hoop Iron 82 Tons" and employees "In R&S Mill Four Men. Nail Factory Three men consistently & occasionally three others heading nails." Per the census, the 'R&S' rolling mill flattened iron bars and then slit them into narrow strips. Then, the "Nail Factory" punched out nails from the strips. The flattened "hoop iron" became hoops for barrels or wagon wheels.

Illustration Credit: CAD Artist John Brandrick, who lives in Wales: http://milldrawings.com/index.html.
Frederick Graff designed the Fairmount Dam and Waterworks.