

Catoctin Furnace began as a family owned and operated business. First black slaves and later European immigrants were among the labor force, relying on the iron plantation for jobs and the necessities of life. The growth of large corporations which could produce iron more efficiently with improved technology, markets and transport facilities ultimately doomed this rural industrial complex. Company houses eventually were bought by families who had been employed in the furnace operation.

The village today is a part of the compact "company town" with a furnace stack and the ruins of the ironmaster's mansion at the northern end. In addition to "Auburn," James Johnson's "Springfield" is located southwest on Route 15. The Catoctin Furnace Historical Society, Inc. has restored an early nineteenth century double log house which is used as a museum and interpretive center. A portion of the furnace land is now located in the Cunningham Falls State Park.

Stove cast under ownership of John Brien, 1820-34.

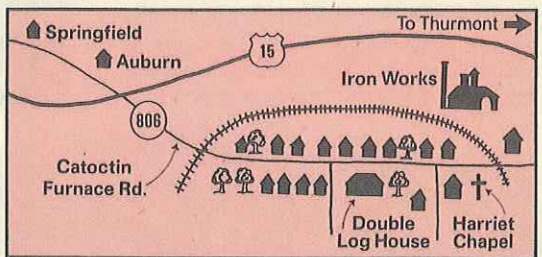
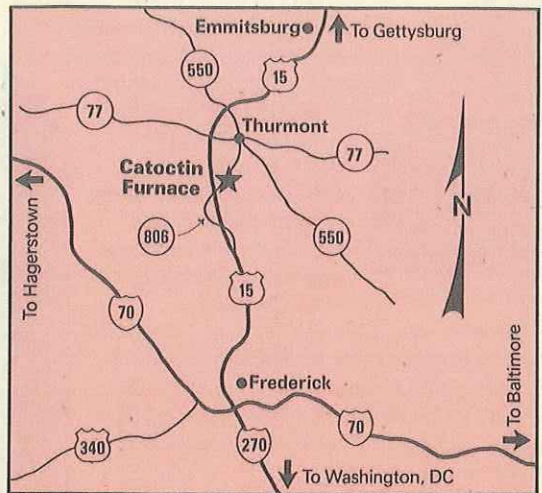


Directions:

From Baltimore: West on I-70 to Route 15 (near Frederick, MD); North on Route 15, 12 miles to Catoctin Furnace exit signs.

From Washington, DC: North on I-270 to Route 15 (near Frederick, MD); North on Route 15 to Catoctin Furnace exit signs.

From Pennsylvania: Take Pennsylvania Turnpike to Route 15 (near Gettysburg); South on Route 15 past town of Thurmont, MD and follow signs to Catoctin Furnace.



Layout of Catoctin Village

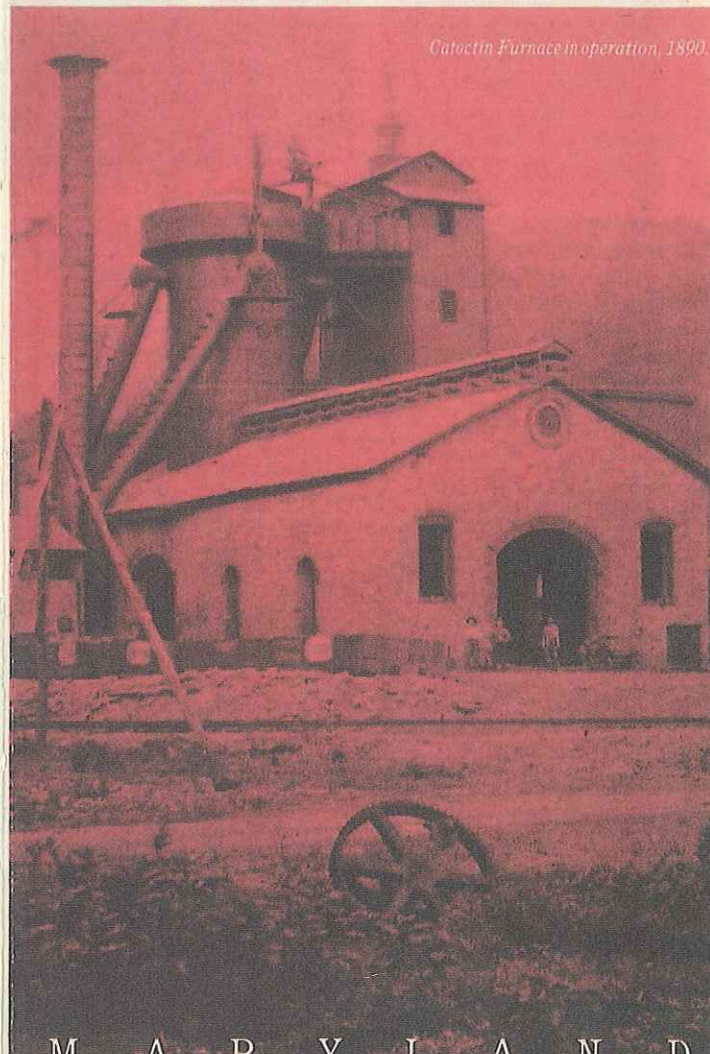


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CATOCTIN FURNACE

Catoctin Furnace in operation, 1890.



M A R Y L A N D

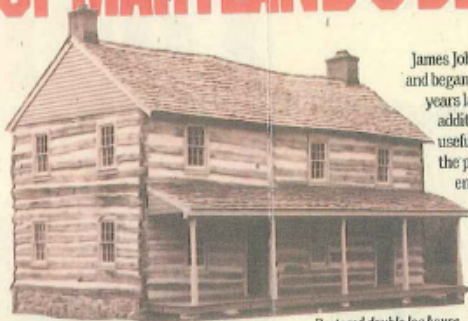
AN HISTORIC 18TH CENTURY IRON FURNACE AND VILLAGE AT THE FOOT OF MARYLAND'S BEAUTIFUL CATOCTIN MOUNTAINS.

Catoctin Furnace is today a quiet and peaceful village nestled at the base of the Catoctin Mountains in northern Frederick County, Maryland. But, for 125 years, until 1903, the site was a thriving iron-making community, a microcosm of American industrial growth.

Setting the stage for Catoctin's development, the end of the French and Indian War prompted a push westward from the seaboard for the opening of new lands and resources by wealthy entrepreneurs and investors, especially professional men and planters from the Tidewater area.

Two of these men, James and Thomas Johnson, brothers, figure prominently in the development of Catoctin Furnace. In 1768,

James, an ironmaster who had built and operated Green Spring Furnace in present-day Washington County, and Thomas, an attorney from Annapolis and later the first governor of Maryland, were part of a group of men who petitioned the royal government for a tract in northern Frederick County, land which showed promise for successful iron production.



Restored double log house.

James Johnson moved to the Catoctin area in 1774 and began construction of the furnace complex. Two years later, in 1776, the stack went into blast. In addition to pig iron, it turned out a variety of useful tools and household items, including the popular ten plate stove. Toward the end of the American Revolution, an order for bombshells for ten inch mortars was placed with the Furnace, and evidence strongly supports the belief that at least a portion of these shells was used during the battle of Yorktown.

Two other Johnson brothers, Roger and Baker, both attorneys, also were involved in Frederick County iron enterprises. In 1803, Baker Johnson became the sole owner of Catoctin Furnace. Shortly thereafter, he built a mansion, "Auburn," still visible just west of Route 15 at the southern end of the village.

Baker died in 1811. One of the subsequent owners of the operation was John Brien, a wealthy Irish immigrant ironmaster who bought Catoctin Furnace in 1820. John and his wife, Harriet, subsequently bought "Auburn," where Harriet died in 1827. As a memorial to his wife,

and for the use of the iron workers, John built Harriet Chapel, which continues to this day as a self-supporting part of the Episcopal Diocese of Maryland. Following Brien's death in 1834, the operation went through a turbulent

period due to uncertain management

and national economic policies.

John Baker Kunkel became owner in 1858. Under his management, Catoctin Furnace flourished as a self-contained iron-making community. In addition to 11,350 acres of land, Kunkel owned 80 houses for workers, a saw mill, grist mill, company store, farms, an ore railroad and three furnace stacks, including an anthracite coke stack with an annual production of 9,000 tons of pig iron. After Kunkel's death, the furnace once again fell prey to misfortune, finally ceasing to operate in 1903. Ore was hauled from the mines to a Pennsylvania furnace until 1912.



Making iron in an early type of furnace.

