

Donald Wendling - The Henry Gunfactory

Donald Wendling's interest in local history motivated him to undertake this historically accurate rendition of the internationally famous Henry family gun factory which was located in Boulton Pennsylvania just north of the early Moravian settlement of Christians Spring. The Henry family's gun making activities began in the area in 1780 when William Henry II set up his business on South Main Street in Nazareth Pennsylvania. The business grew to the point where he located his gun making operation to a tract of land along the nearby Bushkill Creek at Jacobsburg in 1792.

The Henry family's business continued to grow, becoming one of the largest civilian contractors to the U.S. government. A branch business was opened in Philadelphia to aid in the growing production demands. In 1812 William Henry II's sons, John Joseph and William III, decided to build a larger

factory about one mile downstream from the Jacobsburg site. William III left the Philadelphia business where he had been working since 1810 to direct this venture.



Donald Wendling working on an oil painting.

The new factory complex and the settlement that grew up around it were named Boulton to honor the Henry family's good friend Matthew Boulton, a business partner of James Watt. The main factory building, depicted in this painting taken from original Henry family photographs, was a two and one-half story structure

eighty feet long and thirty-eight feet wide. This factory and its seventy-five employees were destined to become one of this country's largest providers of arms to Jacob Astor and the American Fur Trade. ❖



HENRY GUN FACTORY