



Update of NR nomination prepared in 1960

VIRGINIA HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION

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Negative no(s). 4351, 4362,
Steno 5 4363, 4364

SURVEY FORM

c. 1979

Historic name Beverley Mill	Common name AKA Chapman's Mill, Broad Run Mill
County/Town/City Prince William County	
Street address or route number Rt. 55 (John Marshall Highway) at Thoroughfare Gap, vic. of the Plains	
USGS Quad Thoroughfare Gap	Date or period Late 18th C, mid 19th C. Va.
Original owner Jonathan Chapman	Architect/builder/craftsmen Rebuilt 1858 by Burr Powell.
Original use Grist Mill	
Present owner Bull Run Preserve, Inc.	Source of name Previous owner.
Present owner address Bull Run Preserve, Inc.	Source of date Published Histories.
c/o George L. Beavers, Secretary, P.O.	Stories 5 stories on high basement.
Present use Not in use. Box C, The Plains	Foundation and wall const'n Rubble stone, roughly shaped &
Acreage 4.63 acres Va. 22171	coursed.
	Roof type Metal-covered gable roof.

State condition of structure and environs Mill is in fair to poor condition, as are environs. Bldg. is subject to vandalism; surrounding bldgs. are open and vandalized.

State potential threats to structure Vandalism, arson, lack of maintenance, highway construction.

Note any archaeological interest Ruins of older mill and miller's large stone house on property.

Should be investigated for possible register potential? yes ___ no ___ Listed on NR in 1972

Architectural description (Note significant features of plan, structural system and interior and exterior decoration, taking care to point out aspects not visible or clear from photographs. Explain nature and period of all alterations and additions. List any outbuildings and their approximate ages, cemeteries, etc.)

Beverley Mill is a 5½ story stone building on Broad Run at Thoroughfare Gap on the Prince William-Fauquier County line. It is a massive building, four bays by three bays, constructed of locally-quarried, roughly-shaped quartzite and Virginia bluestone laid up in coursed rubble. Some very large stones are found on the building's corners and used as lintels over doors and windows. Stone work suggesting an earlier building period than the rest of the building can be seen on the west end close to the wheel and around the windows. This stone may have been removed from the creek bed: the average size of the stones on this wall is smaller, and the courses are laid up more regularly. The wall near the waterwheel has been repointed. The mill appears to actually rest on the large rocky outcrop that can be seen in front of the mill. A capstone in the middle of the north wall (railroad side) under the eaves bears an inscription relating the mill's ownership history:

From

Johnathan		John
Nathaniel		George
Pearson		to
	John Chapman	
	Rebuilt A.D. 1858	

Several large cracks appear in the walls, but they are said to have occurred soon after the rebuilding in 1858 when two floors were added to the mill, to the walls that were left intact after a fire destroyed most of the interior. Master stonemason Burr Powell supervised the

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Interior inspected? Yes

Historical significance (Chain of title; individuals, families, events, etc., associated with the property.)

Beverley Mill, as it is now known, was built in the 1740's and later by the Chapman family, who owned and operated the mill until the Civil War. The mill's ownership history began with Johnathan (or Jonathan) Chapman, who with his son Nathaniel built the original mills following Jonathan's purchase in 1742 of 650 acres on Broad Run at Thoroughfare Gap in the Bull Run Mountains. Ownership of the mills, according to a plaque, or capstone, on the north side of the present building, passed from Johnathan to Nathaniel, Pearson, John, George, and John Chapman. Chapman's Mill began as a plaster mill where crushed limestone was ground into "plaster" for liming fields. The present mill, downstream from the ruins of Chapman's earlier mill, was built as a gristmill, but probably burned sometime between 1755-57. The mill was rebuilt in 1757-1758 and enlarged, and it functioned as a grist mill for the next 100 years. In 1854 the Manassas Gap Railroad, which passes the mill on the north, drew to a close the era of the horse and oxen-drawn wagon trade from the Shenandoah Valley to Alexandria by way of the Mill.

As a result of a fire which destroyed most of the inner structure and machinery, the mill was rebuilt in 1858 and enlarged by the addition of two floors. Burr Powell, a master stone mason, supervised the construction. It is believed that at that time new machinery was installed for plaster grinding.

During the fall and winter of 1861-62, the Confederate forces used the mill as a meat

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Beverley Mill
(Continuation Sheet)

Architectural description (continued)

rebuilding. The walls at the base of the building are almost 4 feet thick, tapering to about 2 feet at the top.

The entrance to the mill is through a door on the east side. A stone stoop with one stepping stone leads to this entrance. To the right of the door is a wide opening on the ground level, probably a service entrance. Above these two openings on the second story (not counting the basement), is another freight or service entrance protected by a metal-covered hood on brackets. Beneath the roof of the hood there is a pulley wheel.

According to an early sketch of the mill, there was once a frame office at the northeast corner of the mill. (This office was said to have been the only part of the mill located in Prince William County; hence the reason why Prince William has always collected the taxes on Beverley Mill.) Beside the office, and running the length of the north (railroad track) side of the building there was once a 1-story enclosed porch on a stone foundation. The 12-foot wide porch was reached from the outside by a set of stone stairs, and it probably served as the railroad loading platform. Nothing remains of it but a few rotting joist timbers.

The large, 29-foot diameter metal mill wheel is located on the west end of the building. This wheel, installed in 1900, probably replaced earlier wooden wheels, said to have been 28 feet in diameter.

Inside, the mill machinery is supported independently from the mill structure by massive stone piers in the basement. The interior of the mill is constructed of heavy timbers mortise and tenoned together. A broad, open stair rises on the south side of the building. The floors are wood. The interior space is divided up by board partitions which separate one milling step or process from another. Wooden, whitewashed grain elevators, some thought to date to the 19th century, run between the floors. Attached is a separate survey Appendix A entitled "Beverley Mill, Reconnaissance Survey, Mill Machinery," written by Colvin Run Mill Curator Mark Spencer. It describes the interior mill machinery, floor-by-floor.

The mill's water power was provided by a small spring-fed stream about 1,000 yards west of the mill which rose in the mountain behind the mill. A sluiceway, stone-lined headrace, forebay, and flume still exist as does the tailrace, which emptied into Broad Run.

The mill shares Thoroughfare Gap with the railroad on the north, Broad Run on the west and south, and with both S.R. 55 and I-66 on the south. The latter, begun in 1966 and recently completed, comes within 75 feet of the mill structure. To mitigate any adverse impact this highway may have had on the historic mill structure, berms were constructed along the banks of Broad Run. A fence was erected, and plantings were made to enhance the view of the building from the new, raised highway. Appendix B is a preliminary site analysis and inventory prepared by Prince William County landscape architect Jim Pickens in September 1979. This study briefly describes the site's topography, geology, hydrology, soils and vegetation, and contains two maps illustrating the site survey's points.

This several-acre mill site has several other buildings and two ruins of structures all related to the milling activities that took place here. First, about 1,500 feet west of Beverley Mill on the north side of the railroad and in Fauquier County are the ruins of a structure thought to be an earlier mill built by Johnathan Chapman in the mid-18th century. Little about the original appearance of this structure is known except its rough dimensions (c35' x 40') and the approximate locations of some of its window and door openings. About the same distance east of Beverley Mill also on the north side of the railroad are the stone ruins of a house said to have been Meadowland, q.v., the Chapman plantation house.

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Beverley Mill
(Continuation Sheet)
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Architectural description (continued)

This house, which measured c35' x 40', supposedly burned in about 1880. Several kinds of domestic plants, including myrtle and daylilies, are found growing wild around this site. One source claims that a Chapman family cemetery is located near the house and contains, at least, the graves of George Chapman (1769-1840) and his wife Susan Pearson Chapman (1780-1856). To the right of the mill is a dilapidated frame house built in the 1890s and later and known as the Furr House, q.v., after C.C. Furr, Jr., who operated the mill from 1903 to 1946. In the front yard of the mill and slightly east is a small stone building known as Broad Run Post Office, 76-199. This building was constructed in the 1930s as an outlet for the mill.

Historical Significance (continued)

curing warehouse and distribution center to provide meat for Beauregard's army while at Manassas. When orders were given to evacuate Manassas, the Confederates burned large quantities of meat and also burned the interior of the mill to prevent Union troops from using it.

The mill was used alternately by Confederate and Union forces throughout the war. At the war's end and with the death of John Chapman, Col. Robert Beverley bought the mill and 512 acres from the Chapman estate and gave it to his son William in 1879. William Beverley rebuilt and operated the mill primarily as a plaster mill, but meal and feed were also ground here. Hugh White actually managed the mill and also rebuilt the water wheel.

In the late 1880's the mill ceased grinding plaster and may have been idle for several years. A period of rapid turnover of the mill's ownership began in 1896 when the mill was sold to Messrs. Hornbaker and Wolverton. Flour milling machinery was installed at that time. In 1901 the mill was sold to William Jordan, and in 1903 it was sold to Charles Craig Furr, Jr. It is supposed that C.C. Furr operated the mill as a grist mill, then in about 1912 operated it as a plaster mill for about 10 years, and finally reconverted it to a grist mill, which he operated with his son-in-law James Newton Kerr until Kerr's death in 1939. At its peak during the Furr ownership the mill ground approximately 100,000 bushels of grain annually.

In the early 1920's Mr. Furr installed a Fairbanks Morse diesel engine to supplement the water power during dry periods. Mr. Furr also installed new, modern flour milling equipment between 1920 and 1937, a move which eventually became too much of a financial burden, and in 1937 William Wilbur joined the corporation as a full partner and business agent, when Mr. Furr had difficulty making loan payments. In 1946 the mill was sold to Walter Chrysler, under whose ownership the mill continued to be operated by the Furr family, but a combination of factors, including stricter sanitary requirements and lack of interest in the milling business on the part of Mr. Chrysler, caused him to close down the mill after 3 or 4 years, and he sold it in 1951 to Mr. and Mrs. Mack J. West. The Wests used the house as an antique shop and the mill for storage. In the mid-to-late 1960's, the proposed alignment for Interstate Rt. 66 called for the mill's demolition, but a local citizens' group saved the mill by persuading the Highway Department to change the alignment so as to miss the mill. At that time the mill was placed on the National Register of Historic Places, a move which helped prevent its demolition but has not fostered its preservation. In 1973 the Wests sold the mill and 4.63 acres to Athalie Irvine Smith, who in 1976 deeded the property by gift to the Bull Run Preserve, a non-profit corporation which would like to preserve the mill. While the Preserve has no immediate plans for restoration, efforts have been made to make the mill more secure by the installation of several hundred panes of glass, most of which have been broken by vandals.

Sources and bibliography

Published sources (Books, articles, etc., with bibliographic data.) H.H. Douglas, "Beverley Mill," in Echoes of History, July 1971; W.P.A., Writers Project, Prince William, the Story of Its People and Its Places (1941, 1961), p. 196-198; Ratcliffe, R.Jackson, This Was Prince William, (1978) p. 98.

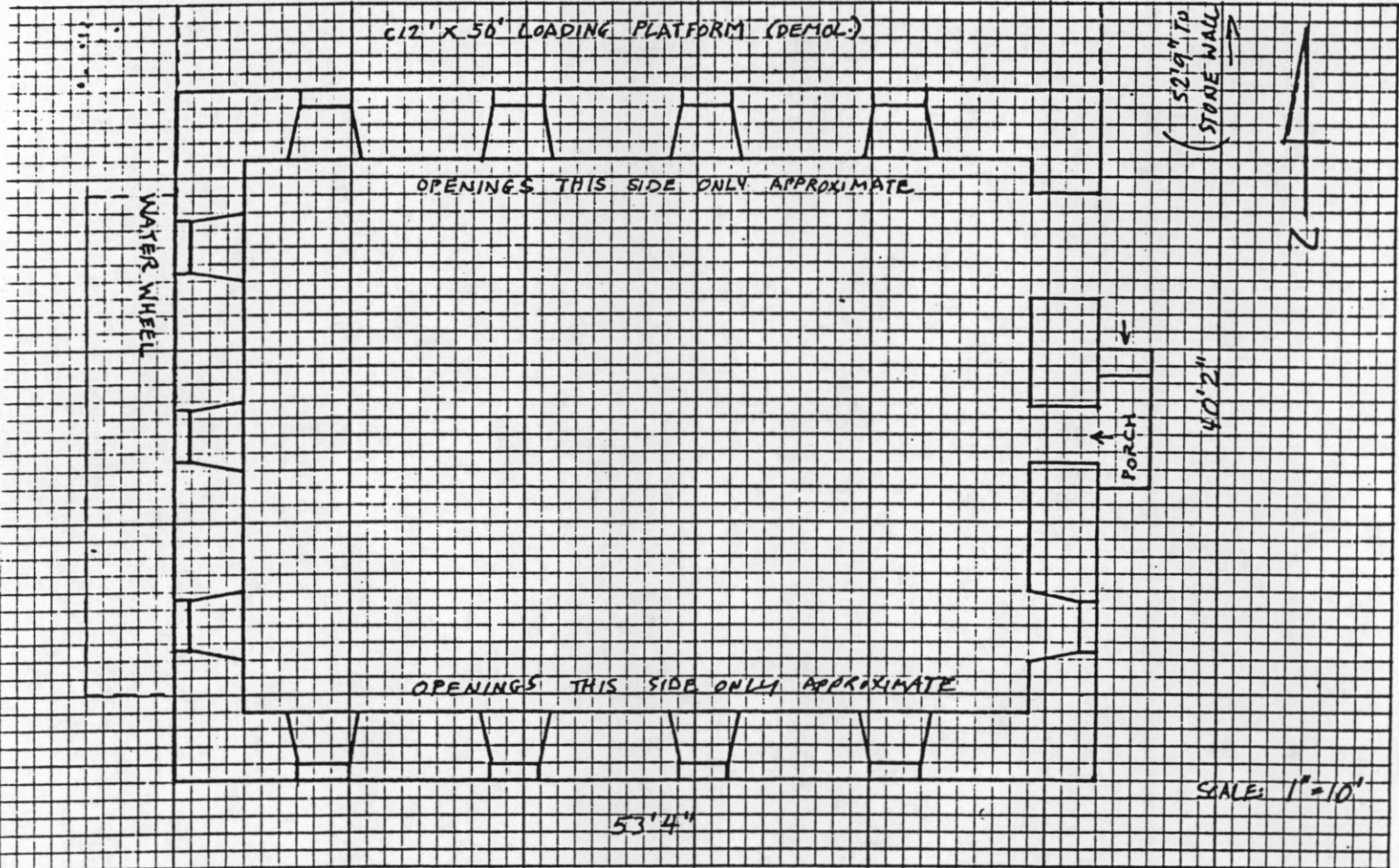
HABS-I 1958.

National Register Listing 1971.

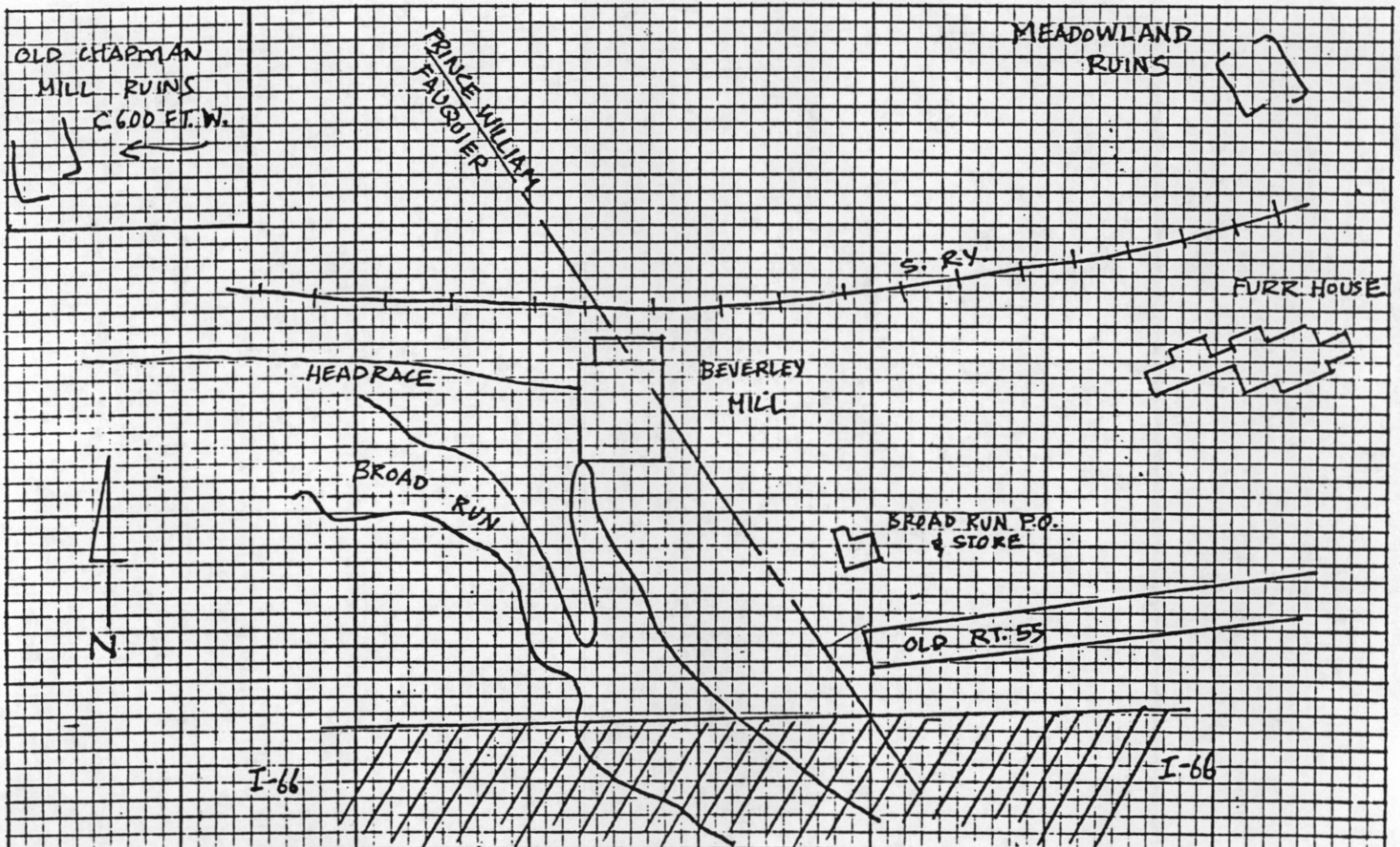
Names and addresses of persons interviewed

Mr. George L. Beavers, Secretary, Bull Run Preserve
P.O. Box C, The Plains, VA. 22171

Plan (Indicate locations of rooms, doorways, windows, alterations, etc.)



Site plan (Locate and identify outbuildings, dependencies and significant topographical features.)



Name, address and title of recorder Frances Jones, Architectural
Historian - Surveyor, NVPDC

Date JAN 1960