

VLR-12/13/88 NRHP-11/8/89

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

HISTORIC SITE FILE: DAVIS-BEARD HOUSE  
PRINCE WILLIAM PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM  
RELIC/Bull Run Reg Lib, Manassas, VA

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16.) Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a) Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name: Glee Hall, Davis House  
other names/site number: Davis-Beard House; 76-245

2. Location

street & number: 10726 Bristow Road  
city, town: Bristow  
state: Virginia code: VA county: Prince William code: 153 zip code: 22013  
N/A not for pub  
N/A vicinity

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
X private	X building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
public-local	district	3	buildings
public-State	site		sites
public-Federal	structure		structures
	object		objects
		3	Total

Name of related multiple property listing:  
N/A

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register: N/A

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets or does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

State or Federal agency and bureau \_\_\_\_\_

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:  
\_\_\_\_ entered in the National Register.  
\_\_\_\_ See continuation sheet.  
\_\_\_\_ determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet  
\_\_\_\_ determined not eligible for the National Register.  
\_\_\_\_ removed from the National Register.  
\_\_\_\_ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

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**6. Function or Use**

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Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

DOMESTIC/ Single Dwelling

DOMESTIC/ hotel

COMMERCE/TRADE/ restaurant

COMMERCE/TRADE/ department store

GOVERNMENT/ post office

Current Functions

DOMESTIC/ Single Dwelling

COMMERCE/TRADE/ Specialty Store

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**7. Description**

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Architectural Classification

(enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: Folk Victorian I-house

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

X See continuation sheet

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation: STONE/ limestone

walls: WOOD/ weatherboard

roof: METAL/ tin

other: wooden porches

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**8. Statement of Significance**

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Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties

nationally

statewide

X locally

Applicable National Register Criteria    A    B    C    D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions)    A    B    C    D    E    F    G

Areas of Significance

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1865-1920

Significant Dates

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations and areas and periods of significance noted above.

X See continuation sheet

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**9. Major Bibliographical References**

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X See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

preliminary determination of individual listing

(36 CFR 67) has been requested

previously listed in the National Register

previously determined eligible by the National Register

designated a National Historic Landmark

recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #

recorded by Historic American Engineering Record #

Primary location of additional data:

X State historic preservation office

Other State agency

Federal agency

X Local government

University

Other:

Specify Repository:

Prince William Planning Dept.

Virginia Dept. of Historic Resources

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**10. Geographical Data**

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Acreage of property: 1/2 acre

**UTM References**

A	18/	279400/	4288920	B	/	/	/
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
C.	<input type="checkbox"/> See continuation sheet			D.			

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**Verbal Boundary Description**

See continuation sheet

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**Boundary Justification**

The boundary includes the entire town lot that has historically been associated with the property.

See continuation sheet

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**11. Form Prepared By**

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name/title	William T. Frazier and George W. Polhill, Jr.	date	June 1988
organization	Frazier Associates	telephone	(703) 886-6230
street and number	213 N. Augusta Street	state	VA
city or town	Staunton	zip code	24401

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 1

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**Summary**

The Davis-Beard House is a frame, two-story rambling Victorian residence with a general store and post office addition. It was constructed in sections after the Civil War in the village of Bristow at the junction of the Southern Railroad and also served as a railroad hotel and tavern. It is in remarkably original condition with its one-story wraparound porch, decorated gables, bay windows, and storefront. There is an adjoining brick hip-roofed carriage house and a small lattice-covered frame privy in the rear of the lot.

**Architectural Analysis**

The original section of this five-bay, gable-roofed, two-story balloon-frame dwelling with its center hall and single-pile plan was constructed as an I-house after the Civil War and has had several additions since then. A two-story dining room addition and a general store were added to the west rear of the house in the late nineteenth century. Shortly thereafter a two-story parlor and bed chamber addition with a prominent bay window and hipped roof was added to the south side of the main facade of the house. A rear shed-roofed porch off of the wing was converted into a kitchen in the early twentieth century. In this same period a two-story, frame, hipped-roof structure was moved across the railroad tracks and attached to a shed-roofed hyphen on the west rear of the house next to the general store addition. This building was used as the post office for Bristow and the small office above was used for a lumber business that the Davis family had on the property.

The front porch has dentils around its cornice, simple square rectangular supports, and a balustrade railing that has been cut down in recent years. There are large decorative caps supported by small brackets over the two-over-two windows, which have blinds with fixed louvers. The front door has six panels with carved floral patterns and a rope motif around the glass window, which is crowned with decorative foliage carving. The central gable, which was added after the original house was constructed, has shingles with a round window and ornately carved elements around it, including a keystone at the top. The bargeboard is heavily decorated in a

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
Continuation Sheet

Section number 7 Page 2

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scroll cutout floral pattern and there are classical decorative leaf-like elements underneath each end of the central gable.

The end gable of the north elevation of the original section of the house has decoration similar to the front gable. The front porch now extends around the north side of the house and continues down the entire length of the structure. This porch continues the dentil work but has Roman Doric columns that appear to have been reused from another building. The porch extension was built in the 1920s. In the northeast corner of the porch is a small office that has been enclosed with diagonal tongue and groove siding and two-over-two windows. Next to this office is the original storefront with projecting display windows that flank a pair of four-panel doors. The bulkheads contain diagonally laid tongue-and-groove molded panels underneath each window.

The north elevation of the old post office has an exterior staircase off the porch that leads to the second floor office. The west elevation of this addition also contains an exterior door with two glass panes in the upper panels. In the rear (south elevation) of the post office building, there is a two-over-two window on the first floor with a four-panel door directly over it. The staircase to this door has been removed.

The west elevation of the wing of the main house has a shallow pitched roof with a decorative bargeboard and a boxed cornice with returns on the ends, and corner boards. Its fenestration on the second floor consists of three two-over-two windows as well as a shuttered window in the attic. All of these windows have louvered blinds. At the first floor there is a four-panel door to the dining room in the southwest corner of the western addition as well as a window in the center. The top two panels of this door have round arched openings containing glass. The remainder of the first floor is covered up with the hyphen which has a door (southern elevation) with six vertical panels.

The one-story kitchen extends off the west addition to the south. It was a porch at one time and has been closed in with siding. It contains two-over-two windows in its west and south elevations. On the south elevation between the kitchen and the parlor is a rear entrance that

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 3

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contains a five-vertical-paneled door dating from the early twentieth century with side lights and a transom. This door enters into a back hall that has the original well to the spring below and was open at some point in its history. Above that doorway on the second floor is a bathroom that was added later and a small service staircase that connects to the kitchen below.

An examination of the cellar reveals that there are some stone foundation walls of an original basement from a structure that probably predates the Civil War. These walls are capped with hand-hewn sill plates and are partially covered with plaster. When the current I-house was constructed the basement was expanded and the new stone walls were built to adjoin the existing walls. This newer construction is evidenced by a basement joist system that contains circular saw marks. These changes could have occurred just after the Civil War because the Davis family, which was living in a structure on this site, was paid \$1,700 according to county records for damage that the building suffered during the Battle of Bristoe.

In the original section of the I-house, which contains the center hall and two adjoining rooms, the doors are four-paneled and the woodwork is undecorated except for a beaded molding. The front hall has an open string staircase with turned balusters, a cedar newel post, and a walnut railing. The parlor which was added to the south side of the original I-house has more ornate woodwork with symmetrical moldings around the openings and bull's-eye corner blocks. The triple-bay window openings contain wooden shutters on the inside that have louvers as well as solid panels. This room contains added false wooden beams supported with brackets reused from another building.

The second floor of the original section has a four-to-five-inch-wide pine flooring, four-panel doors, and a plain beaded molding and baseboard. There is an arched opening at the top of the stair connecting the original section with the west addition. The bed chambers that exist over this wing as well as the room over the parlor contain more ornate symmetrical moldings with bull's-eye corner blocks.

The dining room in the west addition has symmetrical moldings with corner blocks and vertical beaded tongue-and-groove wainscoting. A new wall has been added to its southeast corner

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 4

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to enclose the furnace and water heater.

The kitchen was originally an open porch as evidenced by the exterior siding on the north wall of the kitchen. The beaded tongue-and-groove paneling on the kitchen ceiling has been removed and the rafters are exposed. The beaded tongue-and-groove wainscoting remains as do the diagonal tongue-and-groove-boards on the walls above the chair rail.

The interior of the general store was created by removing the north and west walls of one of the original rooms of the I-house and adding a new wing to the west as a part of the dining room addition. This store room has a pressed metal ceiling and cornice as well as beaded wainscoting and much of its original shelving.

The hyphen between the old post office and the store contains unpainted tongue-and-groove wainscoting, walls, and ceiling. The interior of the post office contains symmetrical moldings and some of the corner blocks have an unusual flowered design of wheat grain. The ceiling is composed of beaded tongue-and-groove boards as is the wainscoting and the walls.

There are rim locks with white porcelain knobs appropriate for the period throughout the entire house. Most rooms contain brick flues for stoves instead of open fireplaces.

An inspection of the attic of the original house revealed the existence of wooden shingles that have been covered over with a metal roof. There is also evidence from the framing members that the front gable facing east to the railroad track was added later and the roof structure of the parlor wing appears originally to have been hipped and then later altered to connect to the existing gable roof.

The carriage house was built at the turn of the century and is constructed of unpainted six-course American bond brickwork. It has a hipped roof with eyebrow dormers on three sides and the southern elevation contains a full-scaled dormer window with a segmental arched cap and roof. The north elevation of the carriage house has a pressed-brick facade in a running bond pattern with a large concrete sill capping a storefront below. It contains large two-over-

**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 7 Page 5

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two display windows and a central entrance with a four-panel door surrounded by side lights and a transom. The bulkheads have four raised panels under each window as well as one panel under each sidelight. The east elevation of the carriage house contains a doorway flanked by two-over-two windows with large wooden lintels and sills. There is a corbelled brick flue in the southeast corner of the structure. The carriage opening on the southern elevation has a segmental arch constructed with three rows of headers containing two large, sliding, vertical-batten carriage doors. The interior of the carriage house remains unfinished and there is no evidence that this space was ever used for commercial purposes although the storefront appears to be original to the rest of the building.

A small frame privy constructed in the late nineteenth century sits on the southwest section of the rear yard. It has a gable roof, and wooden lattice work walls, as well as fish scale shingles in the ends of the gable.

The grounds of the property have mature trees, several along the edge of the road and several ringing the backyard to the south of the house. There is also a low fence along the railroad track on the eastern side of the lot and a driveway between the carriage house and the old post office. There is a modern brick patio behind the hyphen to the west of the house. The main house and additions, the carriage house and the privy are contributing buildings. There are no noncontributing buildings, sites or structures on this property.



**United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places  
Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 1

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**Statement of Significance**

The Davis-Beard House and General Store, prominently located at the intersection of the Bristow Road (State Route 619) and the Southern Railroad, is the finest and most elaborately detailed example of a late Victorian general store and merchant's quarters extant in Prince William County. The store's interior and exterior detailing retain a remarkably high percentage of original fabric including the unaltered storefront with its projecting display windows that retain interior storage compartments, the original pressed tin ceiling, the proprietor's office in the northeast bay, and the original shelving along the west wall. To find a late-nineteenth-century commercial structure in such pristine condition anywhere is a rarity, especially one with a multiplicity of functions including general store, family residence, railroad tavern, and post office. The Davis-Beard House and General Store is an excellent example of the locally run, commercial center of a rural community that served the needs of its local patronage. In a rapidly developing county like Prince William, whose rural landscape is quickly being infringed upon by increasing suburbanization, strip developments, and convenience stores, the preservation of the local general store, especially one of such high architectural integrity as the Davis-Beard House and General Store, is of utmost importance as a symbol of the county's rural heritage.

**Historical Background**

Although the Davis family had owned property in Prince William County since the early colonial period, the 178-acre farm in Bristow, from which the half-acre lot on which the Davis-Beard House was later subdivided, was purchased in 1856 from John Caldwell (Deed Book 24, page 412). The purchase price was \$3,900, and the tax records indicate the property had a building valued at \$1,700 with the total value of the property being \$4,628. Apparently the building was destroyed during the war, probably during the intensive fighting of the Battle of Bristoe in 1863, because by 1865 Thomas K. Davis' property had depreciated in value by \$1,700 for "buildings destroyed." In a letter to the Journal Messenger in 1966, Lora Leone Davis, Thomas K. Davis's granddaughter, indicated that the Davis family fled Bristow for Maryland during the worst fighting around their house. After the war they returned and rebuilt

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section number 8 Page 2

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the center portion of the house adding many improvements. They named their new house Glee Hall. Part of the earlier foundation was incorporated into the new structure and can still be seen in the basement.

The simple, two-story frame structure with a central hall plan was probably expanded about 1878 when the value of the buildings increased from \$300 to \$800, and the total value of the half-acre lot was unusually high at \$3,210. At this time, in the suits of Nicol vs. Davis and Hooe vs. Davis, Mrs. Martha A. Davis, wife of Thomas K. Davis, gained possession of the Bristow property, through her son James T. Davis, who was acting as a trustee. The Bristow lots were described as being "numbered one & two in the survey of The Davis Bristow tract, situate in the village of Bristoe . . . and described as follows, Lot No. 1 by Railroad Street & Main Street . . . and Lot No. 2 by Railroad Street and Lots No. 1 & 3 . . . The division of each lots No. 1 & 2 are 90 feet by 80." (Deed Book 31, p. 212).

According to the 1891 "TABLE OF TOWN LOTS," the structure on the half-acre lot was operated as a railroad hotel and was described as a "tavern lot." Shortly after 1891, the property passed by will to Robert A. Davis, Martha Davis's son. Robert Davis added the storefront at this time, operating a general store, hardware store, and lumber business on the property. He also served here as the notary public. Around 1920, he further expanded the property by moving the two-story, post office wing from its original location on the east side of the Southern Railroad, and connecting it to the general store with the one-story hyphen. He reportedly used the second story office over the post office, reached only by the exterior stair, to check the loads of lumber as they passed through the alley between the post office and the carriage house. The colonnaded porch also was added about 1920, and it functioned as a covered walkway between the general store and the post office.

One of Robert H. Davis's sons who was born at the house, Harry P. Davis, served as mayor of Manassas for forty-two years. It was Harry Davis, along with his siblings Lora Leone Davis, William Jennings Davis, Alberta Wampler, and Mary Davis, who sold the property out of the Davis family for the first time in 1961. The current owners, Mr. and Mrs. Daniel Carter Beard, purchased the complex in 1966 from Kidwell Hammond and Hammond Gunnell, and they use it as their home and as an antique shop.

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section number 9 Page 1

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**Bibliography**

**Published Sources**

Naisawald, L. Van Loan. "The Battle of Bristoe Station." *Virginia Cavalcade*, Vol. XVIII, No. 2, (Autumn 1968) p. 47.

William County Historical Commission. *Prince William: A Past to Preserve*. Prince William County Historical Commission, 1982.

Works Progress Administration Writers' Program. *Prince William: The Story of Its People and Its Places*. Richmond, VA: Whittet and Sheperson, 1941; 4th ed., (Bicentennial Edition) 1976. pp. 26, 147.

**Unpublished Sources**

Unpublished manuscript. Barbara Beard. "Some History on the House Now Called 'The Davis-Beard' House."

**Interviews**

Mrs. Barbara Beard  
10726 Bristow Road  
Bristow, VA 22013  
June 1988

**United States Department of the Interior**  
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places**  
**Continuation Sheet**

Section number 10 Page 1

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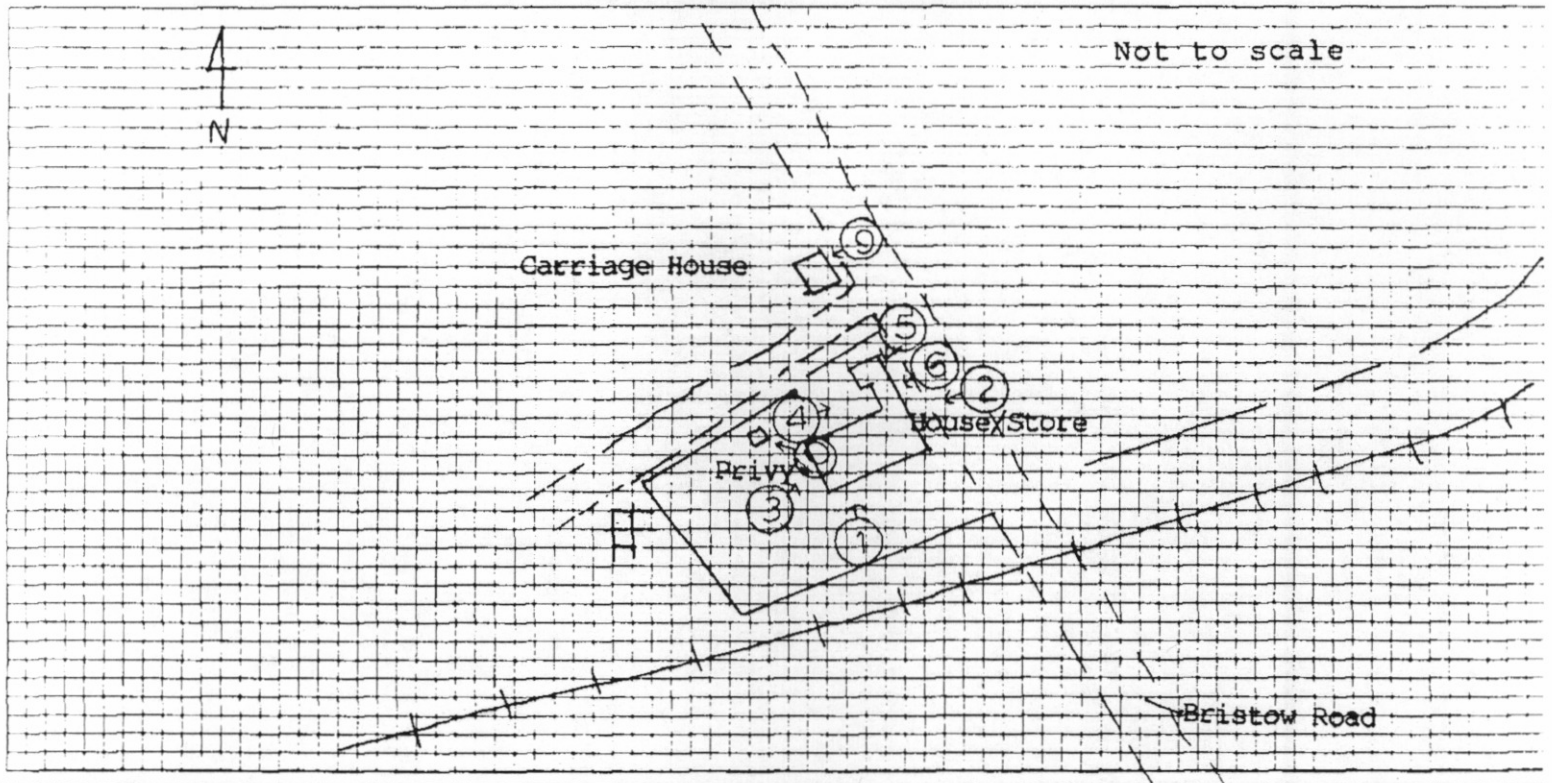
**Verbal Boundary Description**

The property occupies parcel 23 of Prince William County Department of Public Works map # 92S. Beginning at a point at the intersection of Bristow Road and the Southern Railroad proceed in a southwesterly direction for 190 feet. Then proceed in a northwesterly direction for 130 feet. Then proceed in a northeasterly direction for 200 feet to Bristow Road. Then proceed along Bristow Road in a southeasterly direction for 130 feet to the point of origin.

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

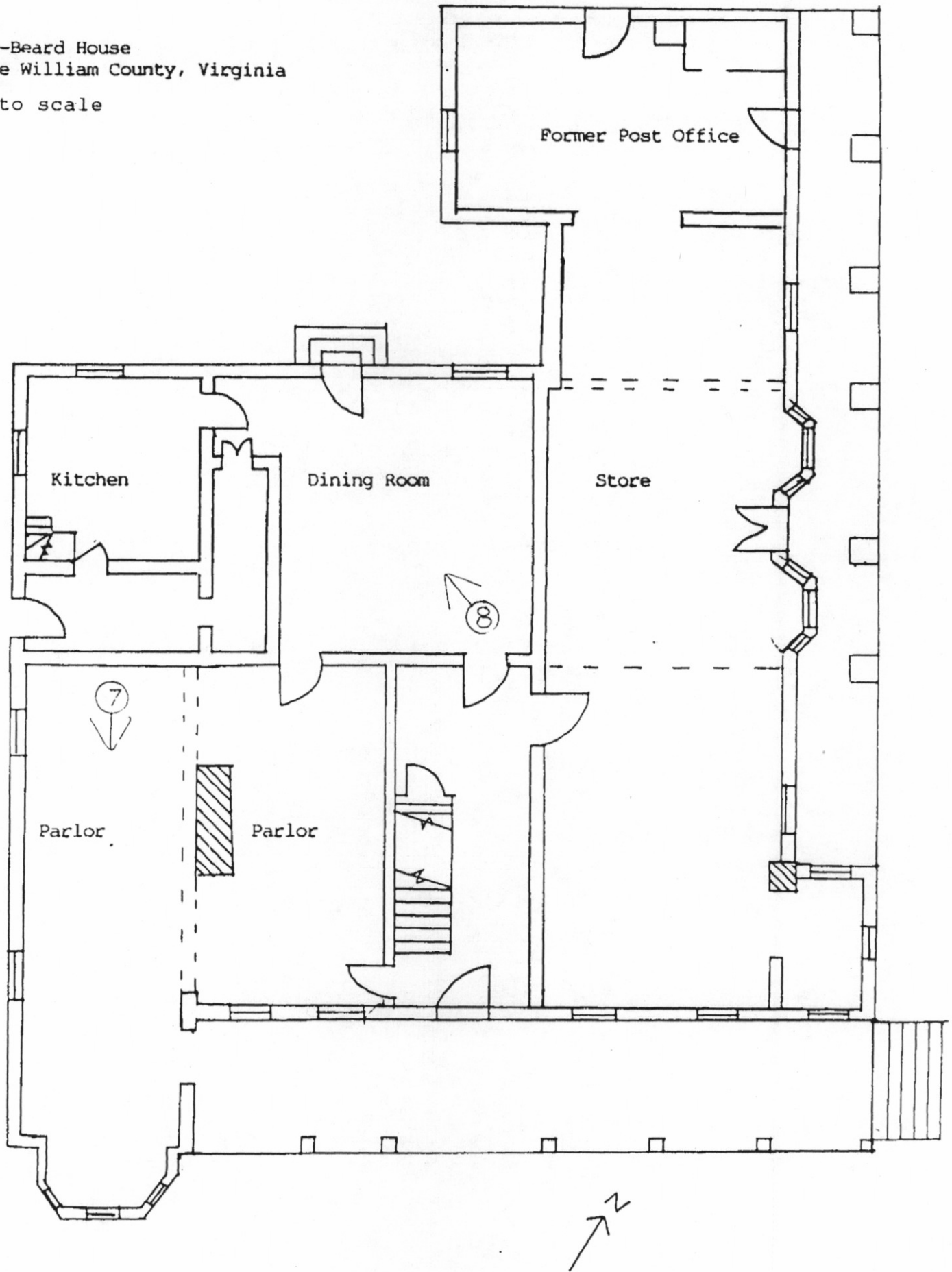
See attached sheet

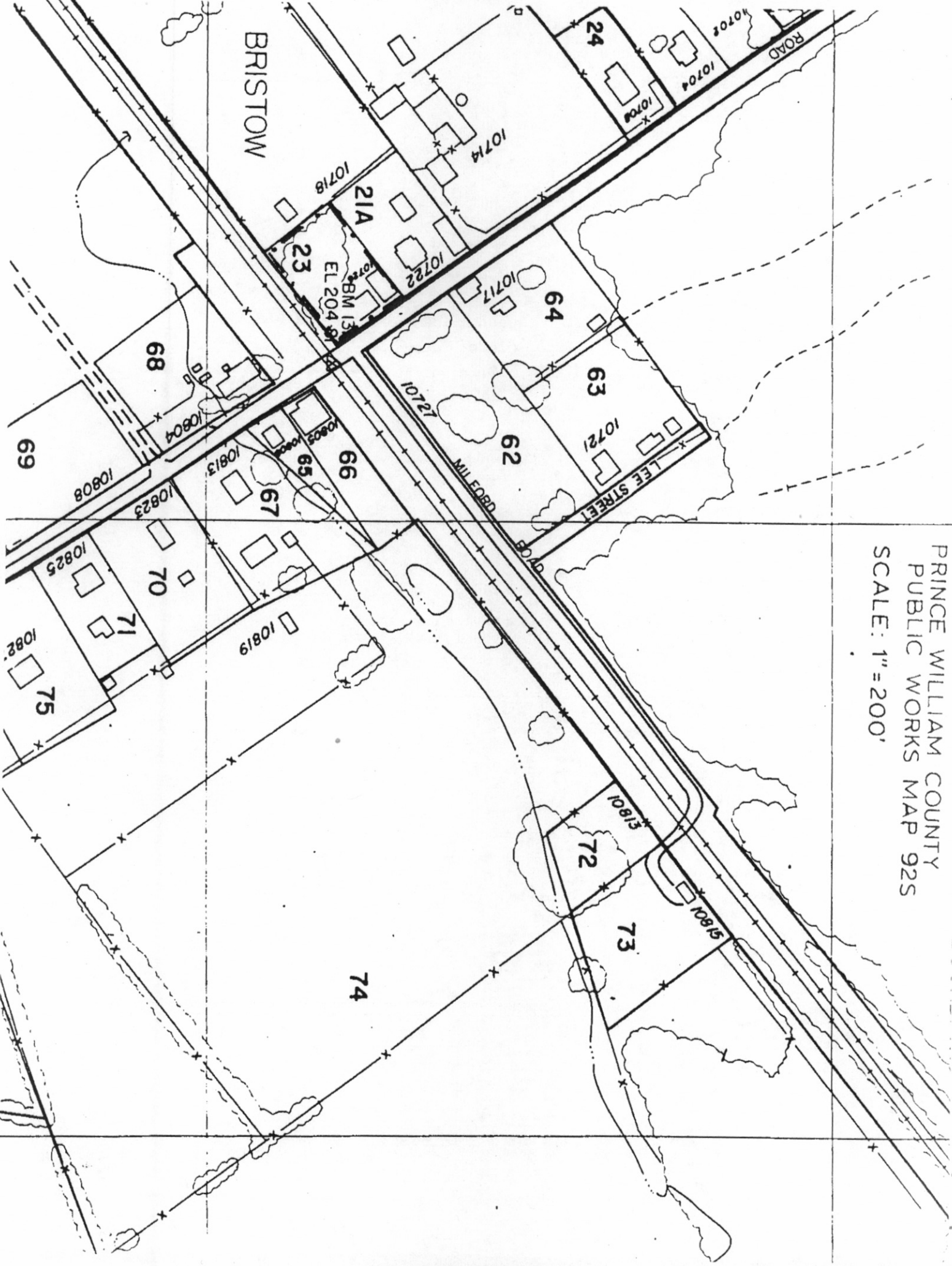
Site plan (Locate and identify outbuildings, dependencies and significant topographical features.)



Davis-Beard House  
Prince William County, Virginia

Not to scale

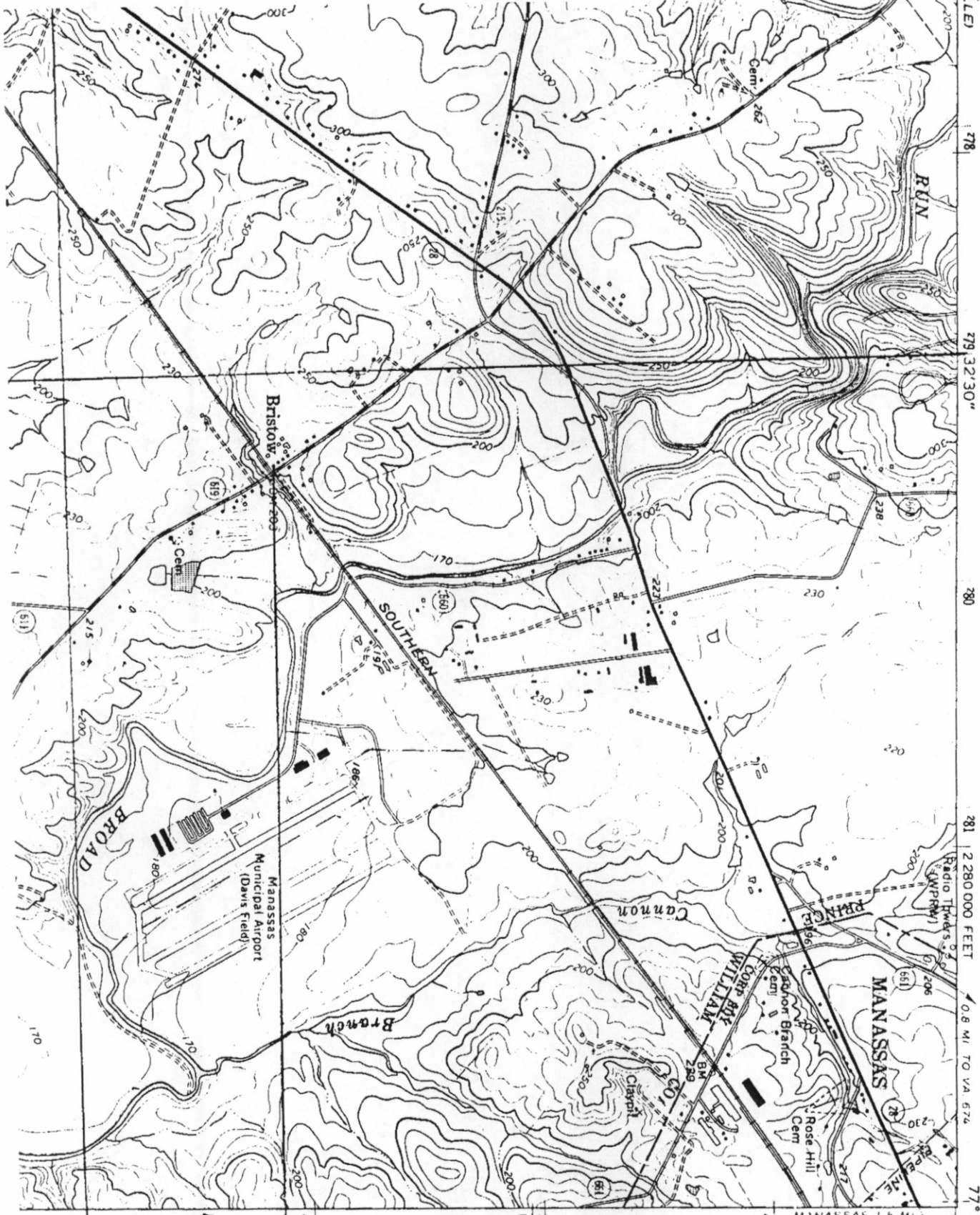




PRINCE WILLIAM COUNTY  
PUBLIC WORKS MAP 92S  
SCALE: 1"=200'

NOKESVILLE QUADRANGLE  
VIRGINIA  
7.5 MINUTE SERIES (TOPOGRAPHIC)

5561 N SW  
(MANASSAS)



Zone  
Davis House  
Prince William Co, VA  
A-18, 127, 1400/4225922

390 000  
FEET

MANASSAS 1.5 MI

77° 30'  
38° 45'

281 | 2 280 000 FEET  
4.08 MI TO VA 574

79 32 30"

78

5  
LEET