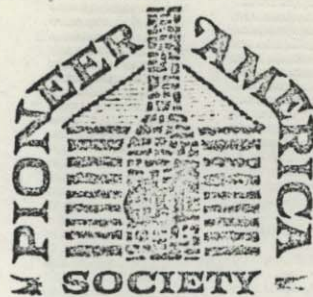


ECHOES



HISTORY

VOLUME 1, No. 5

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Beverley Mill

By H. H. Douglas

Beverley Mill, the most outstanding and impressive of any mill remaining anywhere in the northern part of Virginia, is located on Route 55 on Broad Run in Thoroughfare Gap, on the Fauquier-Prince William county line, midway between Haymarket and The Plains.

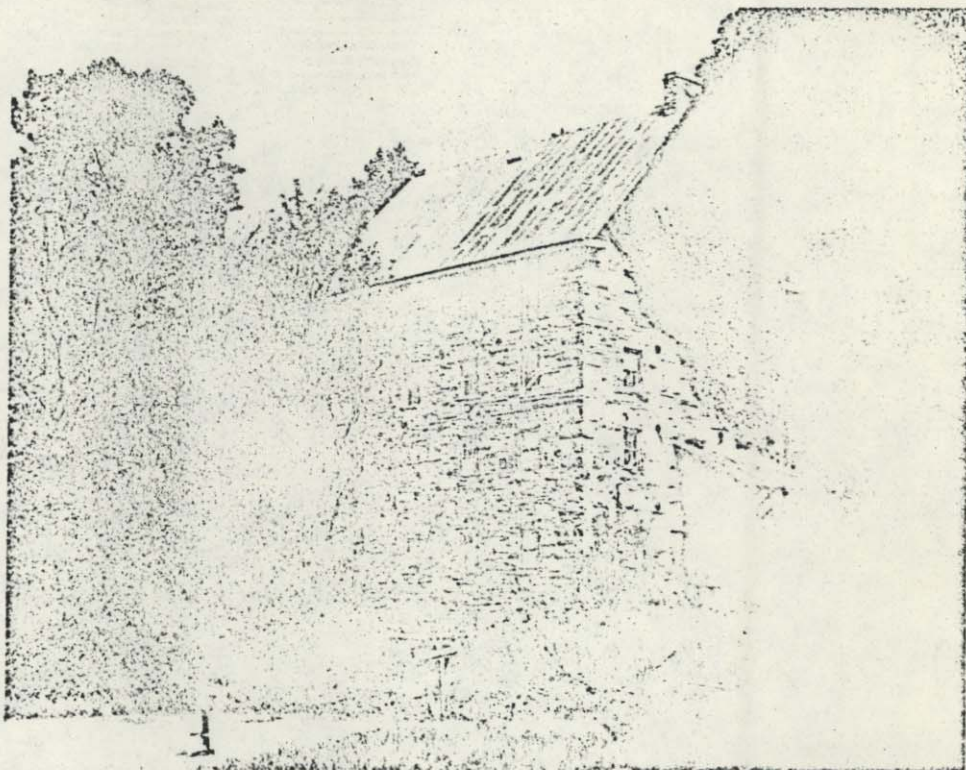
The construction of Route 66 is now in the process of being extended through Thoroughfare Gap where Route 55 (constructed in the 1930s) cuts through the Bull Run Mountains on its way to Front Royal in the Shenandoah Valley. With bulldozers and dynamite the road builders are cutting the new roadway, mostly out of solid rock, on the side of the Gap farthest from the mill. Two highways will run through the Gap—Route 66 within 200 feet of Beverley Mill, with Route 55 on the far side of Route 66. The Virginia Department of Highways heeded the expressed wishes of local citizens and revised their original plans in order to save the mill.

In the days of George Washington, the road through the Gap ran on the north side of the mill where the railroad is now located. Some vestiges of the old road can still be seen. John Marshall used this road frequently.¹ When the railroad was built the trains rolled by just outside the second story windows.

Broad Run flows through Thoroughfare Gap and was the main source of power for Beverley Mill until operations ceased a generation ago.

Beverley Mill stands majestically, though idle, astride the Fauquier-Prince William county line, though taxes are paid in Prince William County. (The USGS topographic maps show all of the mill in Fauquier. Recent highway plans show most of the mill in Fauquier.) Perhaps the reason that taxes were/are paid to Prince William County was that the mill office was in Prince William. The magnificent stone walls are still intact, though the wooden appendages (offices, shipping room, and platform) on the railroad side have rotted and fallen away.

When the mill was sold to Walter Chrysler in 1946 it was jointly owned by the Furr family and Billy Wilbur of Warren-



Beverley Mill as it appeared in May 1970. The office at the right was still standing. It has now fallen down. (Photo Pioneer America Society/Wm. Edmund Barrett.)

ton. Mr. Wilbur had become a partner in the business in 1937. Mr. Kerr had died in 1939. In the early 1950s it was bought by Mr. and Mrs. Mack J. West, together with an old house immediately to the east where Mrs. West operates an antique business. Nearly in front of the mill is a small stone building which has, in recent years, been used as the Broad Run Post Office (it is in Prince William County). It was built in the 1930s as a retail store for the mill.

The post office was first housed in the Broad Run Railroad Station, which is about a mile away in Fauquier County. The first postmaster was Henry F. Robertson, who was installed February 20, 1886. Next came George Burgess (1897-1901); P. D. Brawner (1901-1919); and Elizabeth Bloxton (1919-1958), just months short of forty years. Mrs. Bloxton still lives next door to the Broad Run Station. Mrs. Elaine Wiser has been postmistress since 1958. It looked, in 1968, as though the post office was going to be

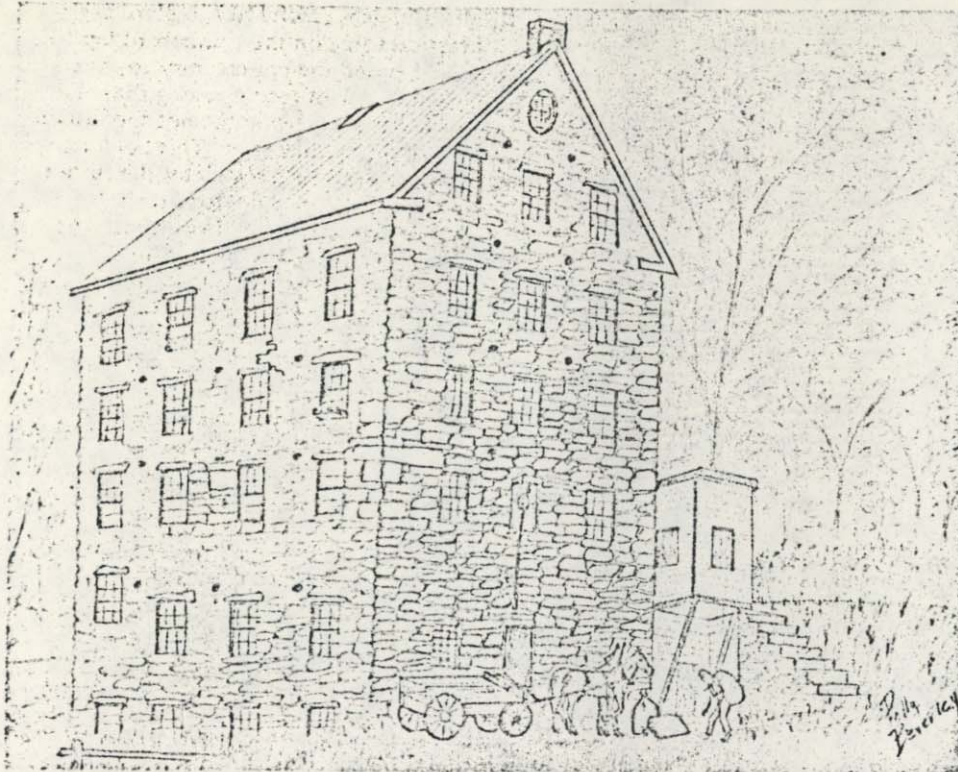
closed for good, but a reprieve came through at the last minute.

Just to the east of the mill and across the tracks are the ruins of the original Chapman house (Meadowland), and a small burying ground nearby. Upstream from Beverley's Mill (in the Gap) was located another Chapman mill built at the same time as the present mill.

The Furr family operated the mill during most of the first half of the 20th century.

In the mid 1960s, in an effort to persuade the Highway Department to route Rt. 66 as far away from the mill as possible, Rev. Melvin L. Steadman, Jr., Northern Virginia historian, and then a member of the Gainesville Ruritan Club, compiled an historical account of the old mill, which appeared in both *The Fauquier Democrat* and the *(Prince William) Journal-Messenger*.² (He has graciously consented to the use of material from this account in the

(Continued on page 78)



The mill as drawn for this article by Polly Beverley, great-granddaughter of Robert Beverley, depicting horse and wagon transport, and showing the office at the corner of the mill.

BEVERLEY MILL, continued from page 1)

preparation of this article.) Rev. Steadman's account was transmitted, with recommendations for the mill's preservation, in a letter to the then Secretary of the Interior, S. L. Udall, urging the utmost consideration for the future of the mill as an historic landmark. As a result of this and expressions from many people in Fauquier, Prince William, and Loudoun counties, the roadway for Route 66 was placed as far away as possible.

In emphasizing the importance of Beverley Mill as a historic landmark, Rev. Steadman pointed out the following:

"1. It is an official boundary marker between Prince William and Fauquier. The Act creating Fauquier County on April 14, 1759, states that the boundary was to be a line to be run from the head of Bull Run and along the top of Bull Run Mountain to Chapman's mill on Broad Run in Thoroughfare Gap; . . . Thus, as a legal boundary marker, the Mill should be preserved.

"2. It contributed essential food products for five wars—beginning with the French and Indian War. The Mill is mentioned in old orderly books and in the public claims for the Revolutionary War (on file in the Virginia State Library). Supplies were shipped to American troops during the War of 1812, the Mexican War, and during the Civil War the Mill was used by both Union and Confederate troops.

"3. Chapman's Mill is a memorial to one of America's great families. From this family, which owned the Mill for generations, came Dr. Nathaniel Chapman (1780-1853), first president of the American Medical Association and editor of the *Journal of Medical and Physical Sciences*. His grandfather, Pearson Chapman, owned the Mill for some years. . . .

"Nathaniel Chapman, who owned the Mill in the second generation, was a

charter member of the Ohio Company, and had experience in iron making at the Principio Iron Mines in Maryland, and the Accokeek Mines in Virginia—another source of aid to the United States troops in several wars. He is mentioned in George Washington's Diaries, and served as executor of the estates of Augustine and Lawrence Washington. . . .

"4. In keeping with President Johnson's proposal concerning the preservation of historic and scenic sites, Chapman's Mill is outstanding in opportunity. Thoroughfare Gap was the natural access route for western pioneers. It is a place of unusual beauty. . . .

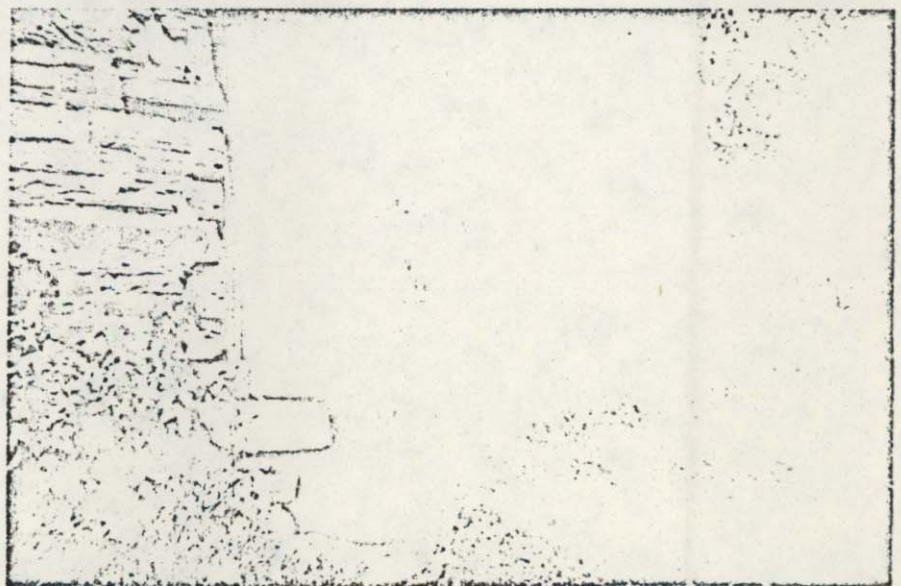
"5. Chapman's Mill is an important adjunct to the Manassas Battlefield Park. Used by both sides during the Civil War, its importance is evidenced by reports filed in connection with both battles of Manassas and subsequent engagements. . . .

The letter to Secretary Udall further stated: "The Gainesville Ruritan Club respectfully petitions the Interior Department to give consideration to the acquisition of the mill property for preservation as an historic monument—an adjunct to Manassas Battlefield Park with which it was linked so closely in these historic engagements of the Civil War."

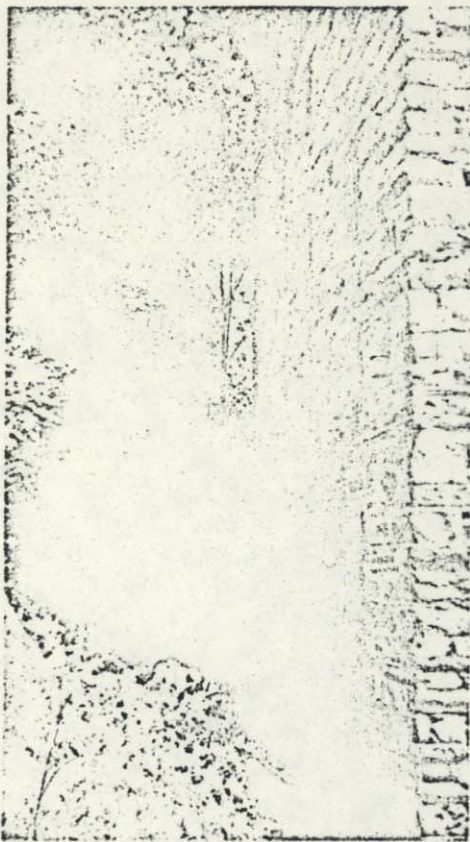
BEGINNINGS -- 1742

Jonathan Chapman (- 1759) and his son Nathaniel (1710-1761) built the original mills in 1742, following Jonathan's purchase of 650 acres on Broad Run in Thoroughfare Gap of the Bull Run Mountains (Northern Neck Deed Book F, page 80; N.N. DBG, p. 151).³ One mill (the present Beverley

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Main entrance to the mill. (Photo Pioneer America Society/H. H. Douglas, May, 1969.)



The present metal mill wheel on west end of building. The preceding wheels were made of wood, 28 feet in diameter. (Photo Pioneer America Society/H. H. Douglas, July 4, 1971).

Mill) was built where it is still to be found at the eastern end of the Gap. The other was built up stream (west) a short distance on the other side of the railroad tracks and close into the mountain where it utilized water flowing off the mountain, probably what is known today as Spout Spring. The present mill has always used Broad Run as its source of power. No dam was ever necessary. All that was needed was for the water falling 87 feet through the Gap, to be channeled into a headrace leading to the mill. It may well be that the tailrace of the Spout Spring mill formed part of the headrace of the present mill.

One writer has indicated the existence of such a race connecting the two mills, which was almost completely obliterated by the construction of the railroad bed.⁴

Slave labor was utilized to carve slabs of building stone from the mountainside quarry near the vanished mill. Papers left in the mill itself have disappeared, other records have been lost over the years and fire in the old Brentsville Court House destroyed others. Few tangible records remain. Five generations of the family occupied the spacious, stone house Meadowland, just east of the mill. A manager was doubtless employed to supervise the mill operations, mostly done by slaves. The manager may also have been

a skilled millwright. If not, such a man would have been a part of the work force. At some point in time, the mill operated under the direction of a Mr. Roach. He was succeeded by John Dawson, and later by Henry Lambert.⁵

Chapman's Mill started out as a plaster mill where crushed limestone was ground into "plaster" for use as fertilizer. Whether any of it ever became part of plaster for covering walls we have not determined. The other mill started out as a grist mill but some time between 1755-57 it apparently burned. Chapman's Mill was then (1757-58) enlarged and was used as a grist mill for the next 100 years.

Almost nothing is known of actual events for the 100 years between 1758 and 1858, other than the more or less self evident facts that the mill prospered in its function as a vital part of the local life and economy, turning grain and corn into food for both humans and animals. There seems to be no record that it functioned as a "plaster" mill at any time during this period.

At any rate, the Chapmans prospered, lived in good homes, had scores of slaves, educated their children, and did well by themselves, the community, and their heirs. For example, Pearson's daughter, Georgeanna (1822-) married Dr. Samuel Rush Bleight of Philadelphia (1852). Dr. and Mrs. Bleight were the grandparents of Samuel Rush Bleight (78) and George Chapman Bleight (88), presently living in nearby Haymarket. They are the owners of over 700 acres of mountain land just north of Beverley Mill, formerly owned by the Chapmans. In this case, however, it is not exactly an asset, since they pay high taxes on land that yields no economic return.

George and Samuel were both born at Green Hill Farm on the edge of Haymarket, of which Judge Arthur Stickley's present Green Hill Farm is but a part. Their parents were Samuel R. Bleight (1850-) and Helen Stuart.

Wagons drawn by horses and oxen brought in wheat, corn, and buckwheat which was ground into meal, flour, and feed, and then hauled away to points away from the railroad in Prince William, Fauquier, Fairfax, and Loudoun counties. This manner of transport continued until the beginning of the automobile age soon after the turn of the century. George and Samuel Bleight remember the wagons that came and went. This was the only means of transport until 1854 when the Manassas Gap Railroad came to the mill's back door. This was a great day for the mill, but it also marked the end of an era. The wagons, drawn by horses and oxen from the Shenandoah Valley via the mill to Alexandria were then no more.

MILL REBUILT

In 1858 the mill was rebuilt with two additional floors. When finished, it was a massive and unique six-story-gable roofed structure built of stones of all sizes from the nearby quarry. Some of them were massive. It took man and horsepower, together with heavy ropes and pulleys, to put many of them in place. In the northeast corner of the mill, one of the first stones to be put in place was a monster about ten feet long and a foot thick. Part of its length covers a door near that corner. Burr Powell was the master stone mason. He and his men really concentrated on every move in getting this big one in place without cracking it. As it was settling into place it did crack. Mr. Powell sat down and wept. But even with the crack, good fortune was with them—solid stone covered the doorway. The crack was several inches away toward the corner of the building.

Another whopper was placed over the door at the water wheel end of the building at the same level as the one that cracked. It is at least 20' thick and approximately eight feet long.

The Chapman Family and the Mill

One of the last stones to be put in place was a "cornerstone" (perhaps capstone), set in the middle of the north wall, under the eaves, identifying the six Chapman men (five generations) most actively connected with the history of the mill.⁶

The cracks in the walls occurred soon after the rebuilding project, but after over 100 years the building seems as stable as ever. At the base the walls are seven feet thick, at the top, three feet.

John Chapman was devoted to the mill project, but the cost of reconstruction caused it to be dubbed "Chapman's Folly." That and the disastrous course of the Civil War broke him. He died soon after the war ended.

On the capstone in the north wall (railroad side) is inscribed the following:

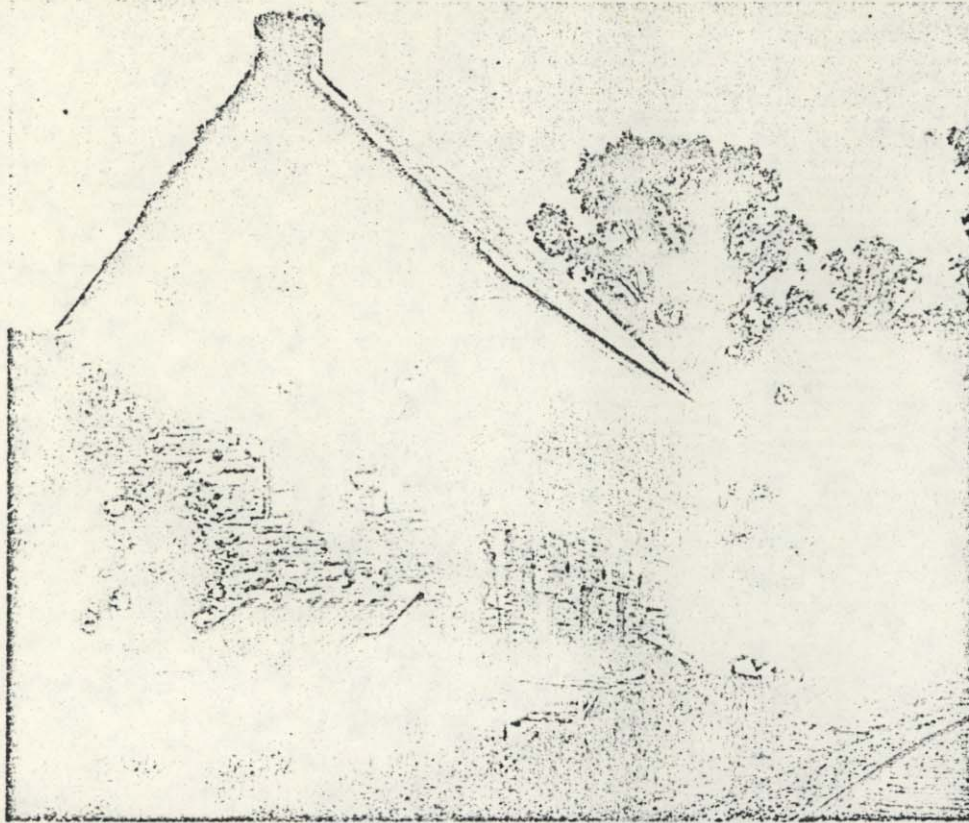
	<i>From</i>	
<i>Johnathan</i>		<i>John</i>
<i>Nathaniel</i>		<i>George</i>
<i>Pearson</i>		<i>to</i>
	<i>John Chapman</i>	
	<i>Rebuilt A.D. 1858</i>	

(Johnathan is so spelled on the stone.)

Leaving out of consideration other members of the family, Nathaniel was the father of two boys, George and Pearson.

1) George (1749-1829) married Amelia McRae and was the father of Dr. Nathaniel Chapman (1780-1853), who was a professor at the University of Pennsylvania from 1815-1850, who founded the Philadelphia Medical Institute in 1817, and in 1847 was

(Continued on page 80)



An angle view of the northeast corner of the mill showing the office and loading platform completely gone. (Photo Pioneer America Society/Wm. Edmund Barrett, Sept. 1971.)

a founder and first president of the American Medical Association.

Dr. Chapman and his father had no close connection with Thoroughfare Gap and Chapman's Mill.

2) Pearson (1745-1784), the third of the Chapmans to be intimately connected with the mill, was the father of twins, John and George, born January 6, 1769. Both were closely associated with the operation of the mill, though very little is known about John. He died in 1812.

George (1769-1840) married Susannah Pearson Alexander (of the family from which Alexandria got its name) on January 5, 1799. They had twelve children including John (1814-1866) who was the last of the Chapmans to own the mill.

The reconstruction of the mill in 1858 was necessitated by a fire which destroyed most of the inner structure and machinery. The date of the fire is unknown. On the walls that were left intact, two stories were added and new machinery was installed, probably for plaster grinding. This development was doubtless due to the opening of more and more farm land in Northern Virginia, and to the advent of the railroad to handle the heavier hauling that was a part of the "plaster" industry.

Where did the limestone come from? Some have said that it came by boat from Nova Scotia to Alexandria, and by train from there. A more likely explanation

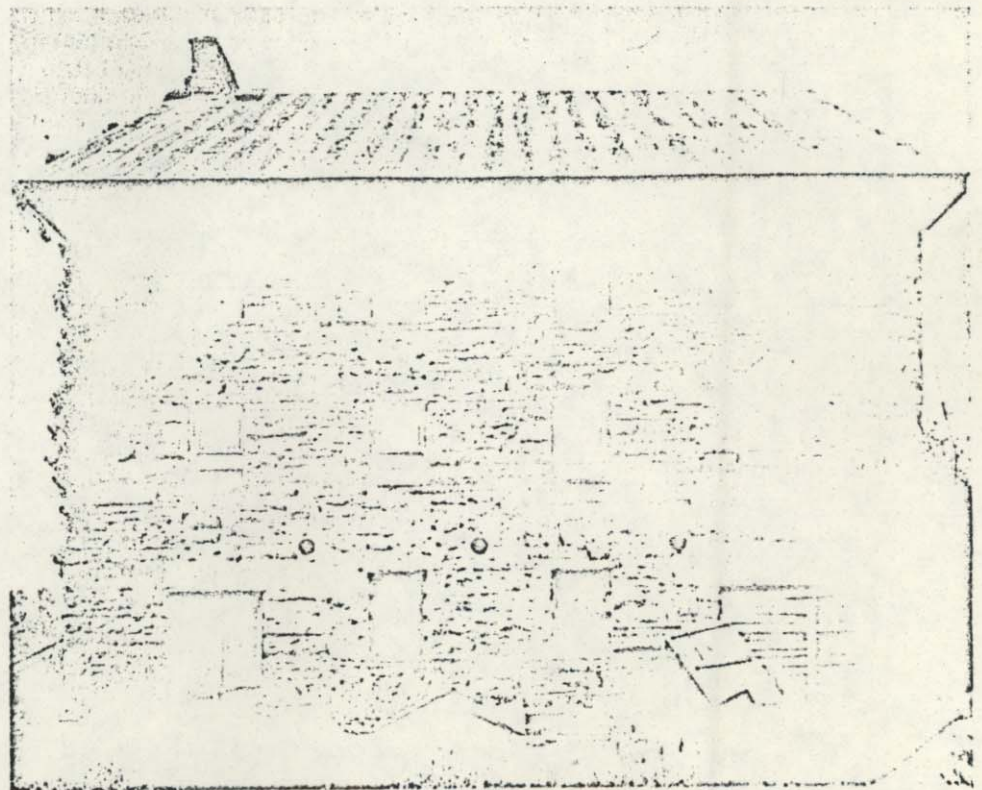
has been provided by Robert Beverley Herbert (92), of Avenel, near The Plains, grandson of the first Beverley to be connected with the mill. He says that his cousins, Robert and Bradshaw Beverley, operated a quarry in the Gap where they crushed stone. They also quarried near Winchester in the Shenandoah Valley. He always thought they shipped the limestone from Front Royal on the railroad. (See end of article for explanation of plaster milling.)

Following the rebuilding of the mill in 1858 it may have been used either as a plaster mill, a grist mill, or both at the same time. The outbreak of the Civil War brought a halt to the normal functioning of the mill. People in the area could not move about freely and railroad cars were at the beck and call of the military, not to mention the fact that the track was frequently damaged or torn up.

CIVIL WAR

The final stopper came when the Confederate Army took over the mill and made it a meat curing warehouse and distribution center. In July 1861, when General J. E. Johnston came through the Gap on his way to the First Battle of Manassas, he reported⁷ that more than two million pounds of meat were on hand

(Continued on page 81)



Beverley Mill from the rear (railroad side) as it appears today. The big stone that cracked is over the door at left. The other big one is over the door at right. The crack in the wall zig-zagged its way from top to bottom. (Photo Pioneer America Society/Wm. Edmund Barrett, September, 1971.)

at the mill as well as vast herds of cattle and hogs in hastily built pens and large enclosures.

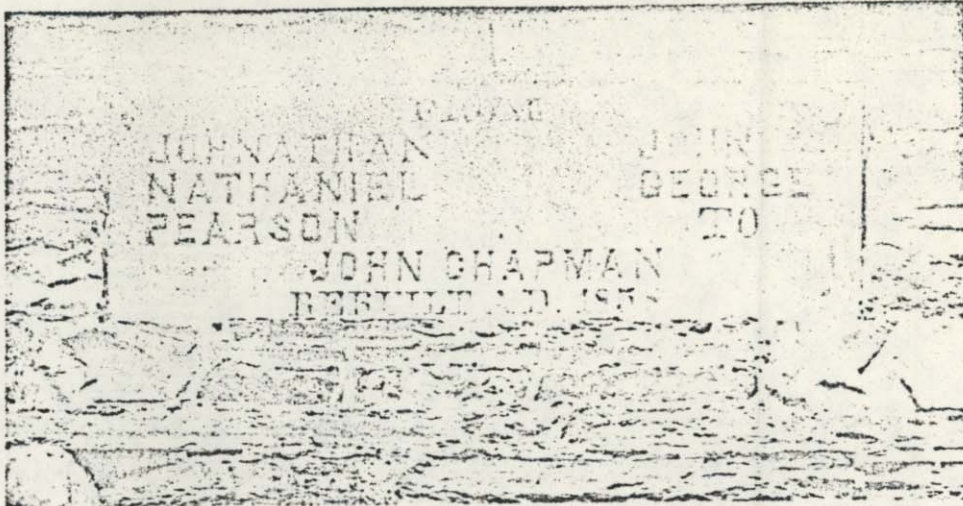
Wm. Beverley, Sr., owner and operator of the mill for approximately 30 years following 1870, described the slaughtering activities graphically:⁸

"There was a large slaughter yard about 100 yards on the east side of Thoroughfare Gap where beeves and hogs were butchered for Beauregard's army while at Manassas. I often went to the slaughter house to see the cattle butchered. In those days the cattle had large horns, and there was a large ring fastened in the floor of the slaughter house, and a big rope passed through the ring and the steer's head was drawn down to the floor, and his throat was cut. There was a trough made in the floor to carry off the blood. The skinning was all done by hand—no machinery in those days—nor was the blood or refuse saved, but all went to waste. This slaughter house was built over a stream, and the water was used to wash it out. After the evacuation of Manassas orders were given to stack up all the pork and burn it. The beef had been taken with the Confederate Army south. The citizens were allowed to haul all they wished to their homes, and the stacks of pork were destroyed by fire."

The interior of the mill was also burned to keep it from being of any use to Union troops.

MILITARY ACTIVITIES

Stonewall Jackson and Jeb Stuart passed through the Gap on Friday, July



The Chapman stone as it appears in the center near the top of the north wall. (Photo Pioneer America Society/Wm. Edmund Barrett, September, 1971.)

19, 1861, on their way to the First Battle of Manassas. General Joseph E. Johnston and his troops followed on a train from Piedmont (Delaplane). Train trouble delayed their arrival at the Battle until Sunday afternoon.

In June, 1862, Union General Shields and his troops passed through the Gap on their way to help oppose General Jackson at Port Republic. They also returned through the Gap.

In August, 1862, Stonewall Jackson again passed through the Gap on a forced march from Culpeper to the Second Battle of Manassas capturing Union

General Pope's supply train on the way. General Pope then ordered General Ricketts to occupy the Gap to prevent the passage of Lee and Longstreet. Ricketts was briefly successful, but after a concerted attack from Pond (Biscake, Biscuit) Mountain on the south (guided by Robert Beverley), and from Mother Leather Coat Mountain,⁹ on the north, guided by a Mr. Hurst, he was forced to retire. Thus, the Second Battle of Manassas began at Thoroughfare Gap, and Lee and Longstreet then pushed on to the main battle which ended Sunday, September 1, 1862.

At one point later in the war, General Augur sent Colonel Albright with a regiment from Washington to the Gap to build post stockades with portholes for rifles. The purpose was to keep Colonel Mosby from derailing the trains. The stockades, within sight of each other, extended from the Gap to Delaplane.

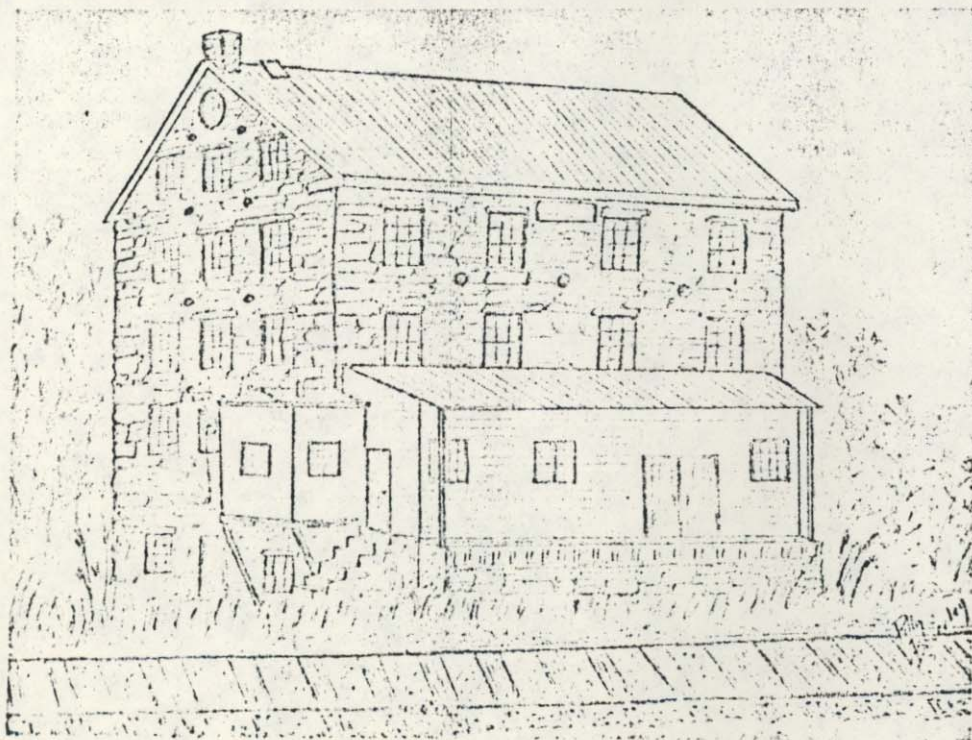
A large Union army, commanded by General Sigel, camped between the Gap and The Plains the winter of 1863-64.¹⁰

END OF THE WAR

John Chapman lived through all this, saw his beloved mill raped and gutted—all of his rebuilding come to nothing. He died at Meadowland, a stone's throw from the mill, only a year following the end of hostilities. For most of that decade the mill, as a mill, was a total loss.

Colonel Robert Beverley, descendant of a long line of Beverleys, lived just up the road, toward The Plains, at Avenel. The original house at Avenel was built in 1823. Chapman's Mill had long been of indirect interest to Colonel Beverley. Following the end of the war, the death of John Chapman and the rebuilding of the railroad, he saw a new potential in the solid stone building. He bought the mill

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The north side of the mill as it appeared when still in full operation before 1946. Drawn by Polly Beverley with an assist from her father, Wm. Beverley, Jr.

and 512 acres from the Chapman estate and turned it over to his son William. William Beverley, Jr.'s present property on the side of the mountain above Millbrook was part of the 512 acres. Colonel Beverley never did have an active interest in operating it. This has been verified by Robert Beverley Herbert, who, in later years, spent much time with his grandfather. The deed to the property was recorded in William's name in 1879.

William ran the project as a "plaster" mill for many years. Extracts from his diary show that in 1877 he was shipping "plaster" by rail to Baltimore, Richmond, Lynchburg, Norfolk, and nearby Virginia towns, and even as far south as South Carolina and Georgia. As many as seven box cars were on the mill siding at one time, waiting to be loaded.¹¹ Meal and feed were also ground at the time.

The actual management of the mill was in the hands of Hugh White, an excellent craftsman, who rebuilt the waterwheel. He also acted as a traveling agent.

Some time in the late 1880s the mill stopped grinding plaster—the market for it must have slacked off. If the mill had an idle period about this time it would have been due to the crisis of 1892-93 which nipped many a budding enterprise and caused the bankruptcy of many ambitious projects.

In 1896 the business was sold to Messrs. Hornbaker and Wolverton, and facilities for grinding flour were added. In 1901 the mill was sold to William Jordan, and in 1903 to Charles Craig Furr, Jr.¹²

Judge Howard W. Smith thinks that, around the turn of the century, or just before, the mill may have had idle periods. As a young man he attended dances at the mill, though the mill would not have had to be shut down for this to happen.

Robert Beverley Herbert's first recollections of it are as a grist mill. He frequently hauled wagon loads of grain, drawn by ox team, to the mill for grinding.

Mr. Herbert also has distinct memories of its use as a plaster mill. He thinks it was a grist mill for a considerable period before 1910 or 1912, and then for ten to twelve years it was a plaster mill. If this be true, C. C. Furr would have bought it as a grist mill, converted to plaster, and then back to grist. Mr. Herbert used to ride the train, which made a regular stop at the mill. He has a distinct recollection of seeing freight cars—gondolas—covered with lime dust on the mill siding.

THE FURR FAMILY

Charles Craig Furr, Sr., lived in Augusta County, near Staunton. He had eleven children and was one of the first apple growers in the Shenandoah Valley.

Charles Craig Furr, Jr. (1869-1962) bought Beverley Mill and moved to Broad Run in 1903. He had three daughters. Audrey Furr Kerr still lives at Broad Run. He acquired a partner and a son-in-law, about 1920, in the person of James Newton Kerr. Mr. Kerr died in 1939.

There were busy seasons during the Furr ownership when the mill ran day and night. At some point Virginia did not produce enough wheat and large amounts had to be shipped from Chicago. The mill was able to grind approximately 100,000 bushels of grain annually. In the 1940s the mill did a gross business of between \$8,000 and \$18,000 monthly, as it had for many years.

Water power was used continuously in the twentieth century with the aid of a big Fairbanks Morse diesel engine installed by the Furrs in the early 1920s to supply auxiliary power during dry spells (it was a real brute to activate). Electricity provided lighting. Between World Wars Mr. Furr installed new and modern flour milling equipment. The other machinery, in use for decades, continued to be used. Installing the new equipment was a mistake and Mr. Furr found himself in serious financial difficulties. When, in 1937, payments on a loan made in 1925 could not be kept up, William Wilbur (of Warrenton) came into the picture as a full partner and business agent. Operations continued until 1946 when Walter Chrysler bought the mill and the Furr house.

The mistake, as far as Mr. Furr was concerned, was in not realizing that in

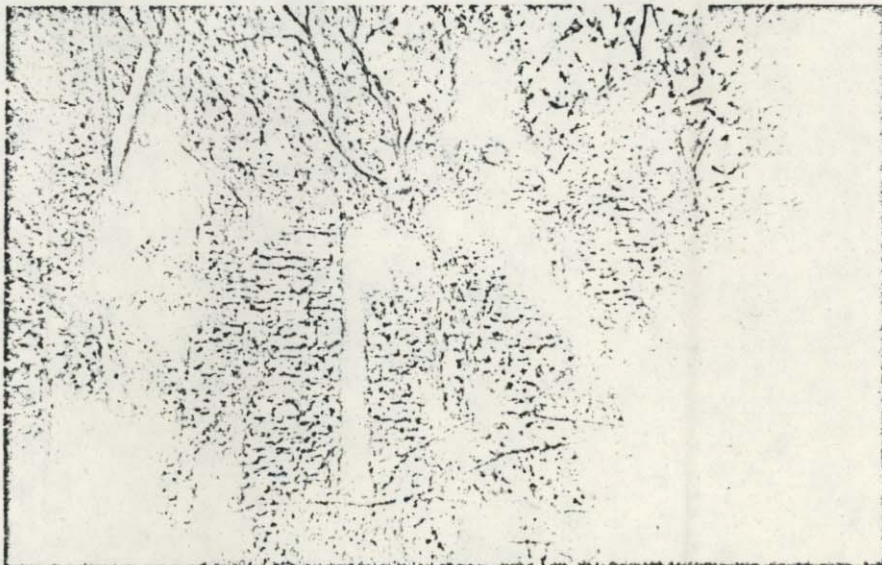
the country's economy the milling techniques that had served so well, had already been completely superseded by more sophisticated methods, and that a small mill even with modern flour milling machinery, could not compete with huge mass production plants. If he had been content to keep the mill as it was, the business though more limited in scope, might have continued indefinitely. The mill would have been a big attraction as well as being the only source of water ground meal in this part of Northern Virginia and Maryland.

Mr. Chrysler removed the diesel engine and put electrical power equipment in its place. He never actually operated the mill, and had no real interest in the milling business.

Keeping a mill clean was a major undertaking. Dust and spilled meal would constantly accumulate and weevils were a problem. But there was a use even for that. It would be swept up, bagged, and would wind up in somebody's moonshine brew somewhere on the mountain, north or south of the Gap.

Mrs. Kerr thinks that they could have operated the mill indefinitely without trouble with the Food and Drug Administration. Mr. Chrysler was very uncooperative and truculent about the sanitary requirements they wished to impose. Things came to an impasse, he closed the mill and sold it and the Furr house to Mr. and Mrs. Mack J. West after three or four years of ownership.

Mrs. West uses the house as an antique shop. They live in McLean, Va. They have no plans for the mill, and would undoubtedly be most cooperative in any concrete plans incorporating the mill, the Gap, and Mother Leather Coat Mountain into a national park. (Cont'd on page 83)



Ruins of Meadowland, the original Chapman house, presumably built in 1742. (Photo Pioneer America Society/H. H. Douglas, May, 1969.)

THE HOUSES

Meadowland

Meadowland, a spacious stone house, is located just east of the mill and, since 1854, on the north side of the railroad (i.e. between the railroad and the mountain). It was the Chapman home from the 1740s until John's death in 1866. It was not sold with the mill in 1870, and continued in the family until it burned in the 1880s. It was occupied by the Bleight brothers, sons of Georgeanna Chapman Bleight, at the time of the fire. A large portion of the walls are still standing, and a small cemetery is located in the woods at the rear of the house. George Chapman (1769-1840) is buried there, as is his wife Susannah Pearson Chapman (1780-1856). Two of George and Susannah's children, brothers of John, may also be buried here—Nathaniel (1812-1836) and Alexander (1823-1866). We do not know John's burial place.

Tanglewood

Tanglewood was another Chapman house built about a half mile south of the mill on the east side of Route 600. We have been unable to ascertain when it was built or when it burned though it could well have burned as the result of Civil War activities. It probably was a frame structure. It faced north. It was replaced by Millbrook which faced east.¹³

Millbrook

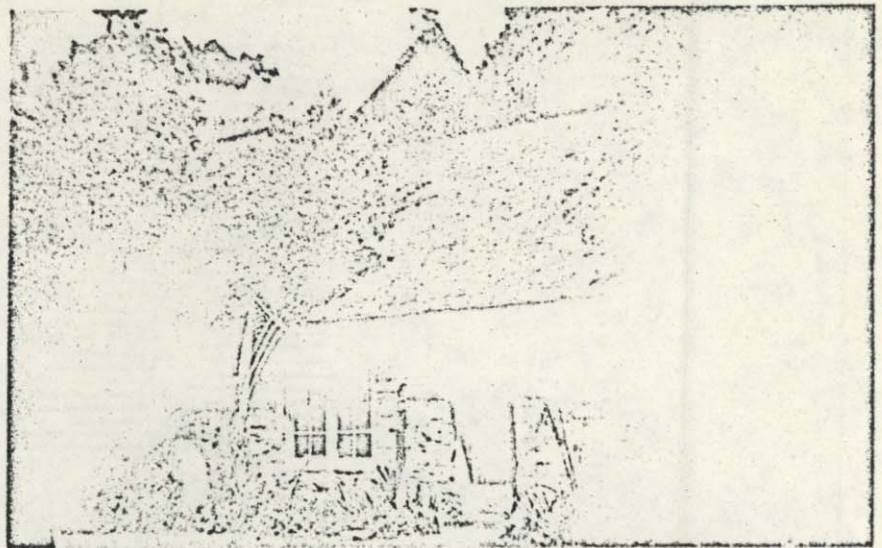
Millbrook was built right after 1870. Mrs. Elizabeth Bloxton, postmistress of Broad Run for forty years, says that her father, Franklin D. Vaughan, who came to Broad Run soon after the Civil War, helped build the house for Robert Beverley (1822-1901) and his son William (1852-1937). Robert Beverley Herbert says that his uncle, William Beverley, Sr., lived there continuously from the time of his marriage in 1875 until his death in 1937. The Beverley's owned it for but a few years after William, Sr.'s, death—until 1942.

After that it changed hands several times and in the late 1960s, abandoned and vandalized, it succumbed to the bulldozer and was left on the spot as a pile of rubble.

The present square stone gate posts were put there after the Beverley ownership. Millbrook is carved into the stone of each post, but the carving was done by two different stone carvers in different styles of lettering. The original gate posts were massive pieces of wood inserted in the ground.¹⁴

The Furr House

This house is now used by Mr. and Mrs. Mack West as an antique shop. Both



Broad Run Post Office with mill in background. (Photo Pioneer America Society/H. H. Douglas, May, 1969.)

Samuel R. Bleight, of Haymarket, and Mrs. Kerr say that it was built either by Jordan or Wolverton, one of the short term owners at the close of the century. Wm. Beverley, Jr., who now lives just south of the Gap, says that the house was there well before 1910—for all of his life. At any rate, it was the Furr home and was also the home of the Kerrs (James Newton Kerr and Audrey Furr) after Mr. Kerr came to the mill about 1920 and after their marriage in the early 1920s.

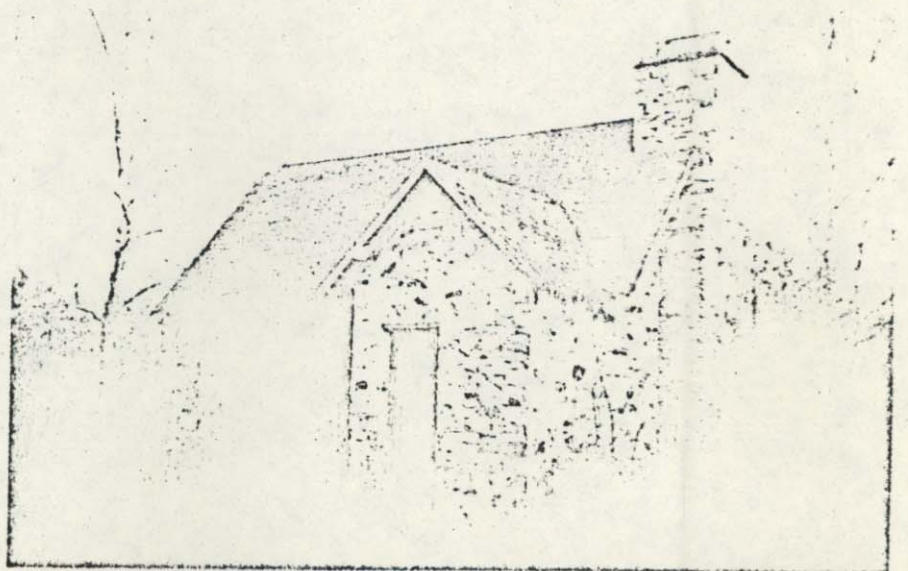
Audrey worked at the mill as the bookkeeper—"I was the biggest dog up there." Mr. Kerr died in 1939. Mrs. Kerr continued to live in the old house until the property was sold to Walter Chrysler in 1946. At that time she had a stone house

built across the road and about ¼ mile east, where she and her son Jack (45) now live. Jack has never married. As a boy he milked the cows, fed the hogs and chickens, mowed the yard, and worked in the mill where he packed bran and middlings in Fauquier County and flour in Prince William County.

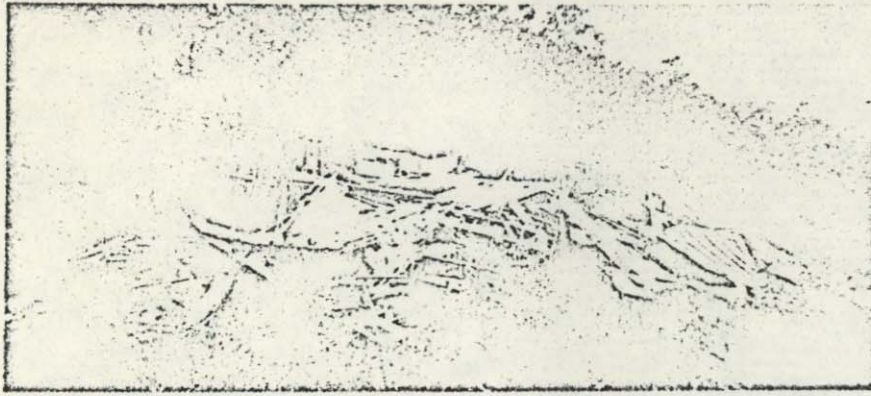
Broad Run Post Office

What is now the Broad Run Post Office was built in the late 1930s as a retail outlet for the mill. W. E. Herrill was the builder. They sold corn meal, whole wheat flour, and wheat germ. They also sold gasoline. This building and its function was the brain child of Mrs. Kerr.

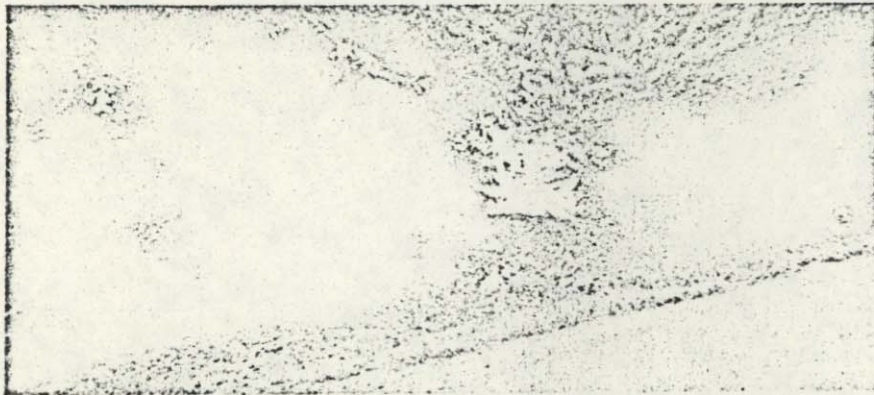
(Continued on page 84)



Rear of Broad Run Post Office. (Photo Pioneer America Society/H. H. Douglas, April, 1971.)



Millbrook as it is today. (Photo Pioneer America Society/H. H. Douglas, July 4, 1971.)



The Millbrook gate posts on the edge of Rt. 600. The bright spot beyond the posts is the rubble of the house. (Photo Pioneer America Society/H. H. Douglas, July 4, 1971.)

PLASTER MILLING

In talking with various people about the mill some knew that "plaster" was ground there, but none knew anything about the process. Calls to the Department of Commerce and the Department of Agriculture revealed nothing. The following is based on information supplied by Clifford Currie, superintendent of the restoration of Colvin Run Mill on Route 7 (Leesburg Pike), Fairfax County Va.

"Plaster" was finely ground limestone used as fertilizer and soil conditioner. After quarrying, it was crushed into pieces not more than 1/2" in diameter. At some point, either at the quarry or near the mill, it was subjected to intense heat to ease the final grinding process.

A mill could operate as a "plaster" mill as a grist mill, or both at the same time, using separate pairs of stones. The grinding process was essentially the same for meal and for "plaster." The fineness of the grind was determined by the separation of the burrs (mill stones), varying from 2/1,000th to 1/32d of an inch. The same pair of stones could be used for either "plaster" or meal by the mere expedient of cleaning the stones when making the switch.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

In the preparation of this history of Beverley Mill I am indebted to many people: John K. Gott for numerous leads and names; Rev. Melvin Lee Steadman, Jr., for the use of certain background material; Mrs. Audrey Kerr, Broad Run, Va. and her son, Jack Kerr; Wm. Beverley, Jr. for much valuable material, and to his daughter Polly for her drawings of the mill; Judge and Mrs. Howard W. Smith for their recollections of the past; Robert Beverley Herbert for his many memories; Elizabeth Bloxton, long-time Broad Run postmistress; George and Samuel Bleight of Haymarket; Wm. N. Wilbur of Warrenton; and Clifford Curry, superintendent of the restoration of Colvin Run Mill for information on "plaster" milling. All have cast rays of light into the past to make this story possible.

Our thanks also go to Sigismunda M. F. Chapman for material we were able to sift from her *A History of Chapman and Alexander Families*, Richmond, Va. Dietz Printing Co., 1946. 305 pp., illus., relative to the six Chapman men named on the stone in the wall of the mill, and to the forbears of George and Samuel Bleight.

*There has to be more to the story of Beverley Mill than has been written here. The author will be most grateful for additions or corrections to this account. Additional material will be published in future issues of *Echoes of History*.*

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13. Wm. Beverley, Jr.
14. Wm. Beverley, Jr.



One of the paper bags used by Beverley Mill in the 1940s. John K. Gott, of Marshall, recalls that his aunt, Miss Mary B. Smith, used to boil the earlier textile bags for days, sometimes, to remove the ink. She would then make hem-stitched aprons, hand towels, and tea towels. They looked like linen. (Photo Pioneer America Society/Wm. Edmund Barrett.)