



**VIRGINIA**  
**HISTORIC LANDMARKS COMMISSION**

File no. 272-4
Negative no(s). 4906

SURVEY FORM

Historic name Old Hammill Hotel	Common name Beechwood Apartments
County/Town/City Occoquan	
Street address or route number 206 Union Street, Occoquan, VA 22191	
USGS Quad Occoquan	Date or period c1804, c1900
Original owner William Selecman	Architect/builder/craftsmen
Original use Hotel	
Present owner Lola M. Woodyard	Source of name 19th century hotel operator
Present owner address 204 Union Street	Source of date Architectural evidence.
Occoquan, VA 22191	Stories 3 stories
Present use Apartment building	Foundation and wall const'n Brick foundation and wall
Acreage 6,154 sq. ft. (includes more than 1 building)	construction.
	Roof type Composition shingle-covered hip roof.
State condition of structure and environs Building and environs are in fair condition.	

State potential threats to structure  
Note any archaeological interest

Should be investigated for possible register potential? yes X no —

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.)

The Old Hammill Hotel, now known as the Beechwood Apartments, commands a prominent position on the north corner of the intersection of Commerce and Union Streets. The Town of Occoquan is laid out on several hills situated on the south side of the Occoquan River. Across the river in Fairfax County rise steep, rocky, tree-faced cliffs. The Old Hammill Hotel, three brick stories beneath a hip roof, is situated on the heavily-traveled Commerce Street and the predominately commercial Union Street, which slopes down to the river and to the commercial core of Occoquan along Mill Street.

An almost square, boxy structure laid up in five-course American bond, the Old Hotel has a three-story shed-roofed brick and frame addition on the northeast side containing a furnace room on the first floor and screened porches above. The deep eaves beneath the low-pitched, asphalt shingle-covered hip roof are sheathed on the underside with matchboard. There is a box cornice. The 6/6 sliding sash windows have both rounded and jack arches. There are signs of shutters once having been on the windows. Windows on the first floor southeast side, or present front, are modern. The exterior door and window trim is both plain box trim with mitered corners and old architrave trim. The present front door, a replacement door, has an overhead. There is a pent-roof overhang sheltering the main entrance and the entrance to the apartment on the first floor, south. This latter entrance may have been converted from a former window, but the main entrance appears to be the original one. The bricks are probably repointed with portland cement, and the exterior is painted brick red. There are signs of brick rebuilding on the southwest wall, that facing Commerce street. It appears as though the two window opening on either side of center on the second floor level have been shortened; and earlier window or door openings flanking the present center window on the same floor have been sealed up. Perhaps

Interior inspected? Yes.

(Continued)

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

The almost square, three-story brick building on the north quadrant of the intersection of Union and Commerce Streets in Occoquan was allegedly built as a hotel by William Selecman in 1804, the year in which Occoquan was established as a town. The Selecman family is said to have descended from Henry Seligman, a master iron forger who, according to the WPA guide to Prince William, emigrated to America in 1752 and settled in prince William, probably to work at the Occoquan iron foundry. Rolling Farm, west of Occoquan, was the Selecman homesite.

Edward Hammill, a longtime operator of the hotel at Occoquan, lent his name to the place.

The hotel was allegedly used during the Civil War as headquarters by Gen. Wade Hampton.

During the severe housing shortage caused by World War II, the hotel's owner William Franklin Woodyard converted the building to apartments. The Woodyards may earlier have operated the hotel there, and prior to its conversion in the 1940's, the building may have gone vacant and unused. Woodyard operated a store across Commerce Street from the old hotel.

The Prince William County Historical Commission has awarded its historical plaque to this building and has included it in a Commission-published historic sites brochure, designating the structure as a county historical landmark.

ARCHITECTURE (Cont.)

OLD HAMMILL HOTEL  
(Cont.)

a twin front entrance was located on this side, reached by a raised porch which has been removed.

Inside there are six one-bedroom apartments, two on each floor, 18 rooms altogether. The present room arrangement, made during the 1940's conversion, probably does not reflect the earlier floor plan. The doors, mouldings, and partitions all date to the 1940's. The stair, a wide, enclosed, two-flight, single-landing stair, rises along the northeast wall. A wooden rail is attached to either stair wall. At the top of the stairs is a moulded, square newel, with a moulded rail, and square balusters. The floors are of narrow pine tongue and groove boards. The high ceiling in the stair hall, 1st floor, is of pressed tin. Elsewhere, the ceilings have been lowered.

From a preservation planning point of view, this building should definitely be preserved. It is a local landmark; knowledge of its history would substantially enrich Occoquan's record of its past; and the building is an example of a good adaptive reuse. Probably the largest building in Occoquan, it may be the only old brick structure in town. Very likely, it is the oldest major building in Occoquan since Rockledge burned in early 1980.

Sources and bibliography

Published sources (Books, articles, etc., with bibliographic data.)

See 4-part series on Occoquan in Manassas Journal-Messenger, cSeptember 1973.

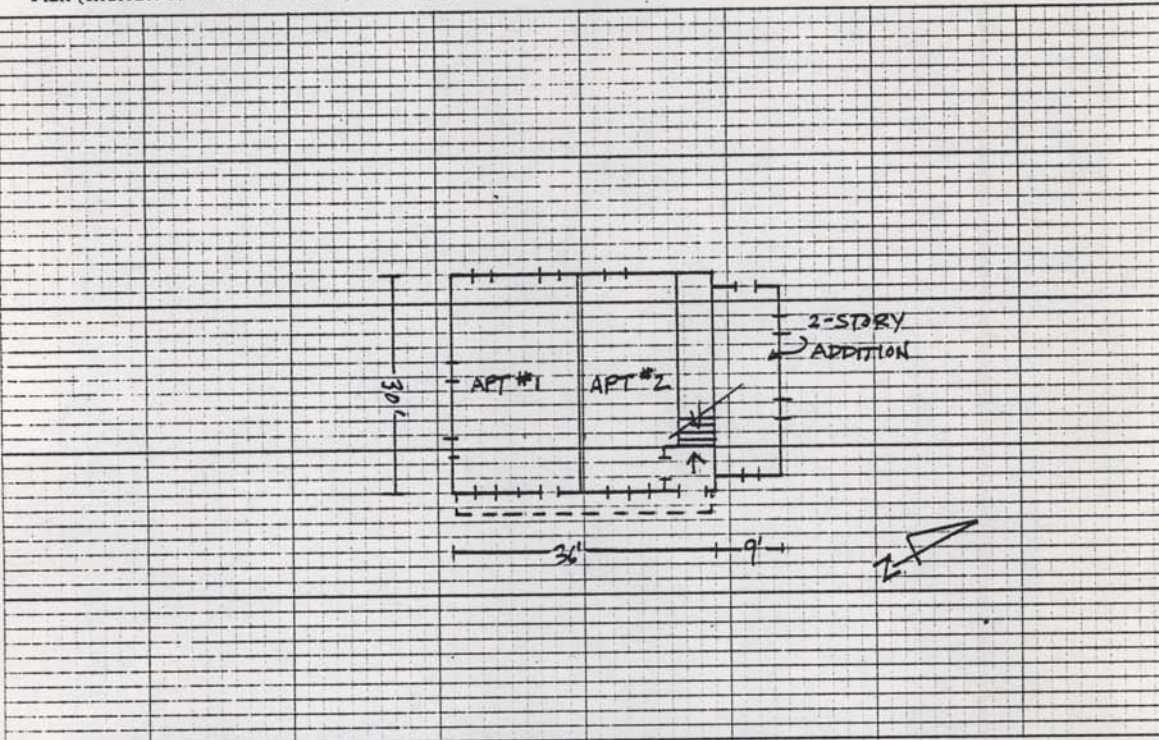
W.P.A.; Writers Program, Prince William, the Story of Its People and Its Places (c1941), p. 82.

Primary sources (Manuscript documentary or graphic materials; give location.)

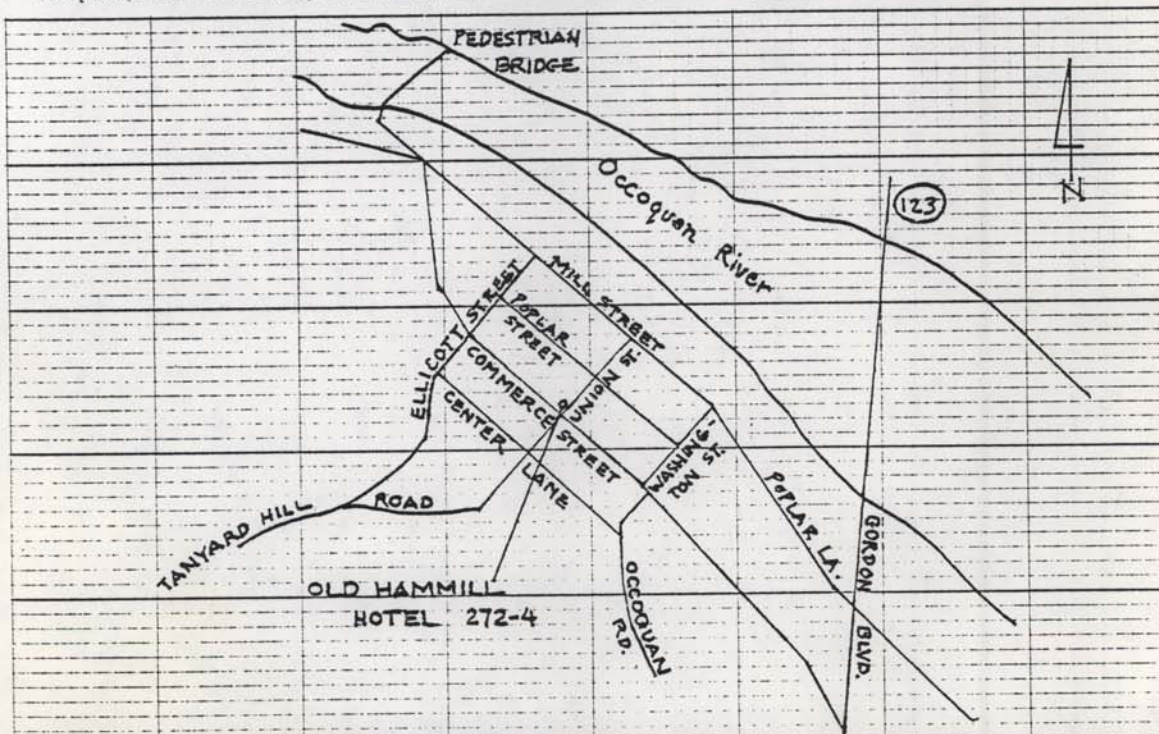
See Plan of Occoquan, 1804, in R.J. Ratcliffe's This Was Prince William (c1978), p. 31.

Names and addresses of persons interviewed Mrs. Lola M. Woodyard (owner), Mrs. Hines (tenant).

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

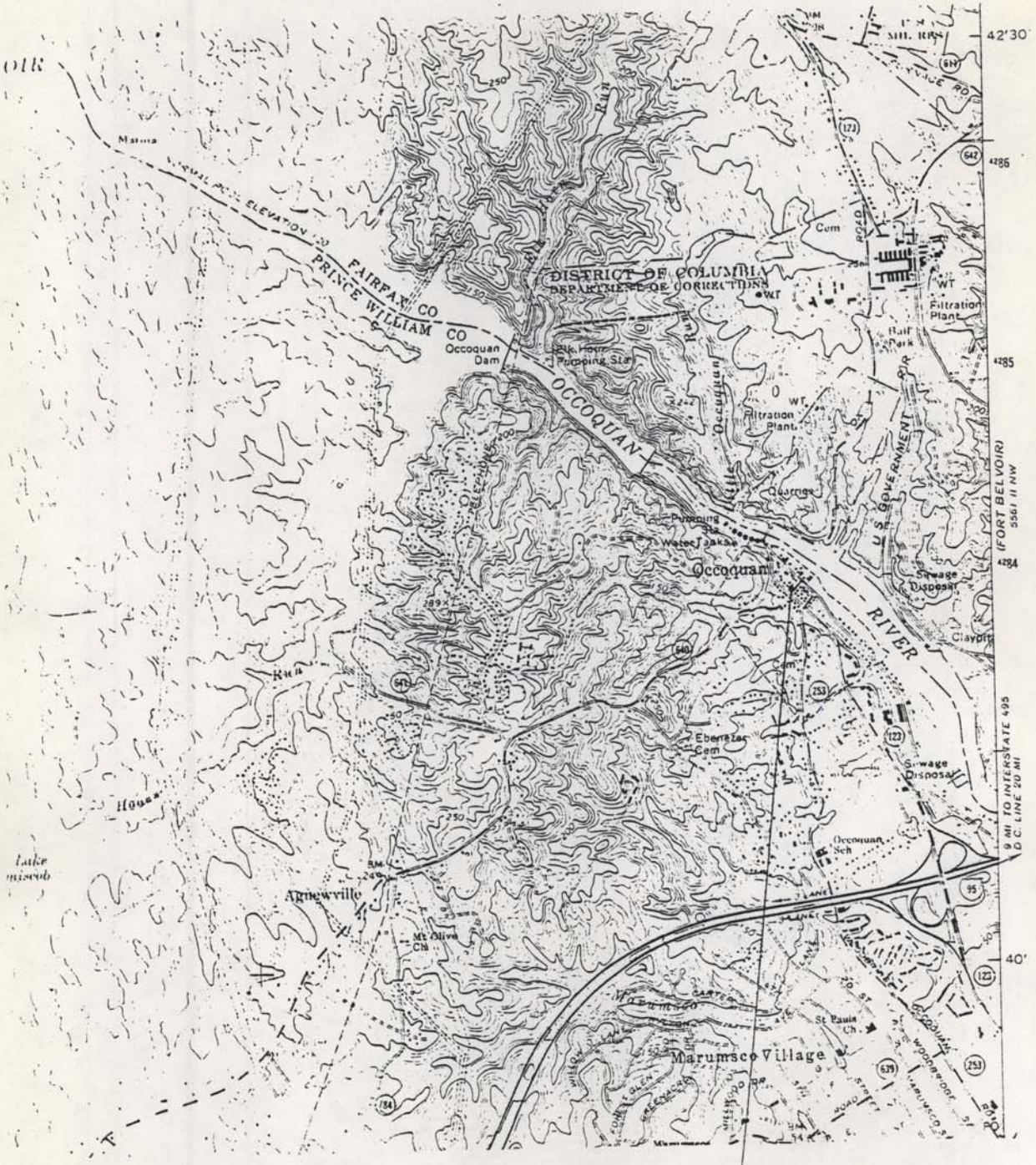


Site plan (Locate and identify outbuildings, dependencies and significant topographical features.)



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

Date SEP 1980



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