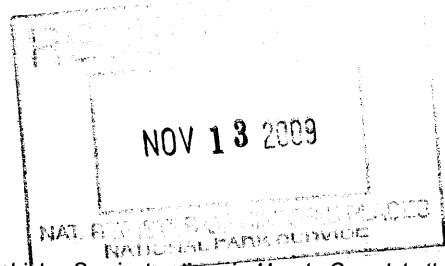


United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

11418



This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form* (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Linchester Mill
other names CAR-5; Langrell's Mill, Hunting Creek Mill, Robertson's Mill, Murray's Mill

2. Location

street & number 3395 Linchester Road not for publication
city or town Preston vicinity
state Maryland code MD county Caroline code 011 zip code 21655

3. 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 does not meet the National Register criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments).

Eiracith Hye / Deputy SHPO 11.6.09
Signature of certifying official/Title Date
Maryland Historical Trust
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments).

Signature of certifying official/Title Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. 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): _____

Edson H. Ball 12-23-09
Signature of the Keeper Date of Action

Linchester Mill (CAR-5)

Name of Property

Caroline County, Maryland

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property

(Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
6	0	buildings
0	0	sites
1	0	structures
0	0	objects
7	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing)

N/A

number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Industry/Processing/Extraction: Manufacturing Facility

Domestic: Single Dwelling

Domestic: Secondary Structure

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

Mid 19th C Greek Revival

No Style

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Brick, concrete

walls Wood

roof Metal

other

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad pattern of our history.
- B** Property associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets)

Area of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Architecture
- Industry
- Commerce
- Agriculture

Period of Significance

c. 1840- c. 1930

Significant Dates

c. 1840 (construction), 1865 (rehabilitation), 1897 (Roller Mills and Turbines), 1918 (Overshot wheel and Case Mills) 1930 (Diesel Engine)

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)
N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets)

Previous documentation on files (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:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository: _____

Linchester Mill (CAR-5)
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10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Approximately 15 acres Preston, MD USGS quad

UTM References
(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	3	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	4	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Mark H. Bourne
Organization Highfield Incorporated date February, 2006
street & number 24576 Langford Road telephone (410)-778-1779
city or town Chestertown state Maryland zip code 21620

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A **USGS map** (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional Items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of SHPO or FPO)

name Caroline County Historical Society
street & number 16 North Second Street (P.O. Box 514) telephone (410) 673-9204
city or town Denton state Maryland zip code 21629

Paperwork Reduction Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 *et. seq.*).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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Description Summary:

The Linchester Mill, constructed c. 1840, is a two and a half story frame mill building sided in red painted weather board and roofed with raised seam metal. Fenestration is irregular and consists primarily of 6/6 double hung windows. The remains of a Fitz overshot water wheel that last powered the mill in the 1970s can be found on the south side of the building. Inside the mill is a virtual museum of early milling technologies retaining nearly all of its equipment from the turn of the 20th century. The mill is in sound structural condition and is being carefully rehabilitated for use as a historical museum operated by the Caroline County Historical Society. Northwest of the mill are two houses, both in a modest 19th century Greek Revival style. The larger of the two is a two and a half story five-bay frame building with blue painted wooden siding. The smaller of the two is a two and a half story two-bay building sided in yellow painted asbestos. These houses were historically the homes of the miller and his assistant respectively. There are two outbuildings associated with the larger house and one with the smaller house. All of these buildings are situated on the southeast end of the village of Linchester about a mile southeast of Preston in Caroline County. To the east of the Mill is Upper Hunting Creek which formerly provided the water power for the mill equipment; remnants of the mill race survive on the property. North of the mill, on the opposite side of Maryland Route 16/318, is the site of the former mill pond.

General Description:

The Linchester Mill property consists of six contributing buildings, and one contributing structure (the mill race). Buildings include the Mill, the Miller's House and its adjacent shed and privy, and the Miller's Assistant's House with its adjacent garage.

The property is located in the village of Linchester on Linchester Road, just off Maryland Route 318/16 about a mile southeast of the town of Preston in Caroline County near the border with Dorchester County. The Mill and Miller's Assistant's House lie south of Linchester road; the Miller's House and outbuildings lie between Linchester Road and MD-318/16.

The village of Linchester consists of fifteen to twenty dwellings all fronting on Linchester Road which parallels Maryland Route 318/16 for about a half mile. The Mill property is located at the east end of the town. East of the mill is Upper Hunting Creek, which historically was dammed to create the mill pond, thus supplying water to the race to power the mill. In this area the Creek marks the boundary line between Caroline and Dorchester counties. The Mill is set back from the road about 250 feet on a large grassy plot. Behind the mill the property follows the muddy tailrace and meandering Upper Hunting Creek through picturesque timbered lowlands. It is the largest structure in Linchester and probably the oldest.

The Mill Building

The Mill is a two and a half story frame structure, four bays long and two bays deep, with a two story lean-to addition on the east side and a one story lean-to addition on the west side. The original (c. 1840)

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building was three bays wide, with the additional bay being added on the west side around 1880. The western lean-to addition was constructed prior to 1900 and the eastern one was built by 1918 based on datable photographic evidence. The A-roof is steeply pitched, covered with raised seam metal and has recently been replaced based on historical photographs. The front (north) façade, which faces the road, has a large gull wing awning also covered in raised seam metal. The primary entry is on the west side of the north façade. The building is faced in 20th Century weatherboard that has been painted red and is irregularly fenestrated on the first floor with (from left to right) a 6 pane window, a double six pane window (in the location of the former entry), and a 6/6 window to the right of the present entry. On the second floor there are three 6/6 windows, one immediately to the left of the split door and the other two evenly spaced from it to the right. The western addition has a second story nine pane window and a 6/6 window on the first floor. There is also a 6/6 window and a double door, for loading, on the western face of the first story of this addition. There is one six pane window on the north face of the western lean-to addition.

On the western façade, a shed-roofed addition housing visitor services was constructed c. 2007, replacing – and generally conforming to the profile and footprint of -- a deteriorated lean-to. On the second and third stories there are 6/6 double hung windows, one on the north side of the second floor, and one to the north of a large central “barn-door” egress on the third floor. A 6/6 window is centered in the peak of the gable. A shed-like shallow pitched A-roof addition formerly wrapped from the west side around to the south to shelter the diesel engine which was added in the 1930s. The concrete foundations for this addition as well as the engine are still in place although the frame components of the shed have deteriorated since the abandonment of the mill in the early 1970s.

On the southern façade approximately 4 feet of the basement level is above grade and has four openings for ventilation. Two of these are covered by louvers; one is boarded up, the other remains open. On the first floor there are, from left to right, a former entry, the frame for a small awning (in a similar style to that of the front although only about 4 feet wide and projecting about 6 feet), a six pane window, the vent for the smutter (one of the pieces of mill equipment used to remove foreign matter from whole grain), another 6 pane window and a split-door egress. The second floor has only a single 6/6 window slightly to the right of the center of the main (five bay) section of the mill. The southern façade of the two story lean-to eastern addition has a door and 6/6 window on the first floor. Visible at the eastern end of this façade is the old and rusted Fitz overshot water wheel which was used to power the mill when it last operated in the early 1970s. The wheel’s shaft extends into the basement, open at this point, to turn the various gears and flywheels that ran the equipment in the mill. Also visible on this façade are the deteriorated supports used to hold the large water box which was filled by the race and supplied water to the top of the wheel.

On the eastern façade the first floor addition has three evenly spaced 6/6 windows justified slightly to the right of the center of the lean-to. The fenestration on the third floor consists of two 6/6 windows on the 3rd floor. One is centered near the apex of the roof and the other further down and to the right of the other. A small brick chimney protrudes from the north end of the addition. This addition is raised on brick piers, under which the mill race flowed to the wheel on the south side of the mill.

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The interior of the mill reveals post and beam construction and a collection of hewn, sawn and circular sawn structural members. It retains a large amount of equipment and is a vast and dizzying maze of machines, grain bins, chutes and elevators. On the first floor, of primary interest are the old French and German milling stones. The vat enclosing the French Millstone has decorative paneling. The French Millstone is made of freshwater quartz from the Marne Valley. It is cut in quarter dress from the firm of B. F. Star in Baltimore. The German Stone is cut in the sickle dress pattern and is probably from the Rhine region. Remaining in the mill is the paint staff, a true beam used to gauge the accuracy of the millstone dress.

Also on the first floor are four roller mills made by the J.M. Case Company of Columbus, Ohio. These were added around 1918 when Frank Langrell purchased them from Williston Mills, his former employer. The first floor also holds a smutter, a fan based device used for removing foreign matter from whole grain, the elevators which would carry ground grains to the third floor for cooling and sifting, and a scale for weighing the finished flour.

The second floor houses a double stacked flour bolter and bran duster made by Case Mill and Elevator Company probably added around the same time as the Roller Mills. The second floor also contains a feed grinder, corn cracker and numerous grain bins.

On the third floor are found a variety of sifting devices including a gyrating plane sifter, and another bolter. The third floor also houses the elevator heads. The elevators were essentially long belts onto which small metal cups had been affixed. The belt went round its pulleys and scooped up grain and flour from the lower levels and deposited it on the third floor for cooling and sifting.

The basement level, which is between four and five feet tall is a network of large iron gears and cogs used to run the equipment on the upper floors. There are channels cut in the floor presumably to direct flood waters out of the basement and toward the mill race. The equipment is largely rusty and in bad repair although it could be restored to working order as the integrity of the mechanisms themselves has not been compromised.

The original water wheel for the mill was a wooden breast shot wheel on the east side of the building. When a set of roller mills made by the Wolf Company were added by J.B. Webster in the late 19th century it appears that the mill switched to turbines, the dominant technology in the day. The breast shot wheel remained in place and can be seen in a 1902 photograph of the mill. When F. Langrell bought the mill around 1915 he switched the technology to an eight foot diameter Fitz brand I-X-L steel overshot wheel which can be seen in a 1918 photograph at the rear of the mill. Langrell also switched the roller mills to the smaller model made by the case company. In the 1930s a diesel engine and the shed to shelter it were installed on the southwest side of the mill, presumably to augment the capricious water supply.

The Miller's House

The Miller's House is located directly north of the Mill on the wedge of land between the Linchester Road and MD-318/16. It is a two and a half story five bay frame structure with a brick foundation and modest Greek Revival stylistic touches. Architectural analysis places the date of the house at about 1840. It is believed that the older section of the house is that to the eastern side, which originally was only two bays wide, and that

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the three western bays were added around 1850. A seam in the cornice corresponds to this segmentation of the building. There is a small modern (1950s) one story addition on the eastern side of the back of the building that houses the kitchen and a half bath. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. There are brick chimneys at both ends of the house. The wooden siding has recently been painted blue with red and white accents, after a historical paint analysis revealed that these were the colors and patterns used when the house was first built.

On the front (south) façade there is a three bay porch roofed in raised seam metal. The porch rail has turned posts and a plain balustrade. The entry, centered on the house, is a four panel door with sidelights and a transom in decorative frosted glass with a circular pattern. The entry is flanked by two 2/2 windows, two of which lie within the porch. The windows, on both floors, are centered on their respective sections of the house. In other words, the second story windows are centered two on the eastern side of the house and three on the west, which gives the house a slightly odd appearance. Each window is finished with a cornice and there are pilasters at the corners of the building which contribute to the modest Greek Revival style of the structure.

The rear elevation has five second story 2/2 two windows spaced similarly to the front. On the first floor there is the modern one story lean-to addition that houses the kitchen and to the right of that a rear entry to the stair hall and two windows to the right of that. The eastern elevation has one 2/2 window on each floor abutting the pilaster on the front of the house. There is a small 2/2 window on the attic level and an entry and window on the lean-to addition in the rear. The rear of the fireplace is not covered with paneling exposing the bare brick. The western façade has no windows.

The first floor interior is divided into two rooms flanking a central (stair) hall with the kitchen and bathroom in the modern addition behind the eastern room. In the first floor rooms original trim, baseboards and mantle help to date the house in the mid 19th Century. There is a step down into the eastern room which supports the idea that it does not date from the same period as the rest of the structure. It has built in cabinetry to the left of the fireplace and unmoulded trim on the windows. There is an even crack on the north wall that suggests the location of a former window prior to the addition of the kitchen/bath.

The stair is an open string set with turned newels and balusters. It rises in a northerly direction to a landing then continues up to the west to a second landing and ascends the final few steps in a southerly direction. From the second floor there are two doors, one to the west and another to the north both of which have two vertical rectangular panels.

The second floor's western room has a built in closet to the left of the chimney and wider yellow pine floors than the first floor. There is a small room in the front of the house adjoining the stair hall and western room that has a hatch for access to the attic. The attic shows the roof structure of common rafters butted together. From the first landing on the stair there is a set of steps to a small back passage that opens to two rooms. This section was added around 1900. The eastern room also has built in cabinetry to the left of the chimney and both have beaded trim surrounding the windows and doors. A late four panel door separates the east and west rooms.

To the west of this structure are two outbuildings, one a small **shed** (about 8'x10') and the other a three seat **privy** (about 6'x6'). Both are frame, sided, painted yellow and roofed in asphalt shingle and stylistically

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similar to the main house although built later. The shed is reputed to have been located at the opposite end of the house but was moved when the highway was constructed.

The Miller's Assistant's House

The Assistant's House is directly across Linchester Road from the Miller's House and about 250 feet north/northwest of the mill. The house is of frame construction with a block foundation and has asbestos siding that has been painted yellow. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. There is a chimney on the west end. This house is smaller with only a two bay façade. A porch runs the length of the front (north) façade and has turned posts and decorative pierced brackets. The entry is on the eastern side of the front elevation. It is a four panel door with sidelights and transom. The windows are 2/2 and there is one on the first floor to the right of the door and two on the second floor. A small gable-roofed addition – the vestibule salvaged from a local 19th-century one-room school – has been attached to the east wall of the house, and functions as program space for the Caroline County Historical Society which owns and administers the mill properties.

The first floor interior consists of a parlor room and a stair hall. The parlor has an open fireplace in the center of the west wall. The stair has a turned newel and turned balusters. The upper floor has two rooms, one on the front and one on the west side that come off the stair hall. The interior is in bad repair. An earlier back wing suffered a fire and was thereafter removed.

There is one outbuilding, an early 20th century **garage** measuring about 8'x18', behind the house.

The Mill Race

The Mill race runs from a spot on the south side of the former mill pond, north of MD-318/16 beneath the highway and the Linchester Road toward the mill and the water wheel. At the entry point from the former mill pond is a large diameter (6') corrugated steel pipe with a heavy grate covering it. It then runs beneath MD-318/16 and then beneath a small concrete bridge under the Linchester road. It then empties into a concrete trough that carries the water down until just before the mill. The water would then have emptied into a wooden flume which has since deteriorated. This flume would have emptied into a wooden box that was supported above the water wheel. The box, being carefully engineered to be at the same level of the pond, would have filled with water and could be opened to allow water to pour over the wheel thus powering the mill. Without the dam, which was destroyed during Hurricane Agnes, no water flows into this aqueduct instead following the original course of the river through the dam and south just to the east of the mill.

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Summary Statement of Significance:

The Linchester Mill is significant under Criterion C as an unusually well-preserved example of a grist mill housing an exceptionally complete collection of milling machinery representing the development of milling technology on the Eastern Shore of Maryland from the 19th century until the mid- 20th century. It derives additional significance under Criterion A for its association with the history of agriculture in the rural Eastern Shore region. From early colonial history there has been a mill at the head of Upper Hunting Creek and the present mill at Linchester, despite additions and rehabilitation, retains a high degree of integrity from its construction in the second quarter of the 19th century. The design, materials and workmanship are representative of the complex mechanisms in a mill of this period. The location of the mill and its surrounding buildings, housing for its employees and caretakers, readily evoke the life of the miller who turned whole grain from surrounding farms into a saleable staple commodity. The spaces and equipment within mill illustrate the intricate technology of this process. The mill is a rare remaining example of an industrial structure whose use has passed. Very few mill buildings of this era survive at all, let alone with their equipment and mechanisms still intact. The Linchester Mill is a key to both the understanding of early milling technologies and to bygone patterns of life in rural Eastern Shore communities.

The period of significance, c. 1840-c. 1930, begins with the presumed construction date of the existing mill building and ends with the last technological update to the mill's machinery. During this period the mill and its contributing resources substantially achieved their historic form and appearance. The mill actually continued in operation until 1974.

Resource History and Historic Context:

The property on which the Linchester Mill sits was originally an assignment of 300 acres given to Edward Perrin of Talbot County for transportation of eleven people into the colony of Maryland. This assignment was transferred through many hands including John Edmondson of Cedar Point in Talbot County who had the land surveyed in June of 1673 which gave the assignment a physical location and the name "The Plains." The first mention of a mill related structure on record is found in the Dorchester County Rent Roll that describes a property on Hunting Creek "above the mill dam."¹ The property was then transferred to a Thomas White of Virginia who took out a patent on the acreage in 1684. Given the fact that White was a millwright it is possible that he built or operated a mill along Upper Hunting Creek in the vicinity of the present Linchester Mill although there is no evidence to support this claim.²

¹ Dorchester County Rent Roll Survey. May 20th, 1682.

² Mitchell, Dora W. "Preston: Before there was a Town" unpublished manuscript.

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In 1754 150 acres of "The Plains" was purchased by John Dickinson and the deed for this transfer defined the property as beginning "on the north side of the head of Hunting Creek and next adjoining the mill dam."³ but there is no mention of a mill *per se*. In 1755 Dr. William Murray purchased seven acres of The Plains and eight years later he deeded the land to his son, David, describing the property as that "upon which the mill house now stands."⁴ This is the first recorded mention of a mill house on the property in the vicinity of Upper Hunting Creek and it is possible that this mill was built by Dr. William Murray.⁵

Upon the death of David Murray in 1764, the mill and the land on which it stood were deeded to his brother James Murray. James died in 1784 and left the mill property to his son William Littleton Murray who died in 1792 leaving the property to a cousin, Dr. William Murray Robertson, son of Dr. Thomas and Amelia Murray Robertson. During this period (up until at least 1795) the mill was known as Robertson's Mill. In 1828 After the death of Dr. Robertson in 1815 and his widow in 1826, their son advertised for sale the Upper Hunting Creek Mill. The Mill was bought by Jacob C. Willson of Caroline County.⁶

Between the death of Dr. Robertson in 1815 and the sale of the property to Willson in 1831 it seems likely that the mill either deteriorated or was torn down. Previously some have attempted to justify dating the present Linchester Mill building (at least in part) in the late 17th century. Analysis of building materials and techniques makes a date this early highly unlikely and places the construction of the current building in the second quarter of the 19th century. This date could suggest that Willson rebuilt an idle and deteriorating mill after its purchase in 1831.

The town of Preston, now a center for commerce in southern Caroline County, was preceded by a village in the location of present day Linchester called Upper Hunting Creek. During the early period of the mill described above, Upper Hunting Creek was an important center of trade in this area of the Eastern Shore and a port until the 1840s. During its most active period there existed within the village a wharf and tobacco houses as well as a grist mill that is the antecedent of the present Linchester Mill.⁷ "Flour from this mill was loaded onto scows and then reloaded onto ships anchored in [the Choptank River] to be shipped far and wide."⁸ Washington's troops at Valley Forge also received flour shipped from this and many other Eastern Shore mills during the Revolution. By the early 19th century much of this industry had waned due largely to the decline of tobacco cultivation in this part of the Eastern Shore. The mill is the only business that remained in the town. In 1856 the Upper Hunting Creek post office was moved to Preston (formerly called Snow Hill) and in 1860 the village of Upper Hunting Creek was renamed Linchester, supposedly a combination of the names Caroline and Dorchester.⁹

³ Dorchester Old Liber 15. f. 25.

⁴ Dorchester Old Liber 18. f. 356. from McGrain, John. "Molinography of Caroline County."

⁵ Mitchell.

⁶ Liber Q. f. 534.

⁷ Mitchell.

⁸ McGrain

⁹ McGrain.

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After building the core of the present mill (the eastern three bays of the main building) Jacob Willson died in 1851 and in 1855 the mill was sold to John R. Stack, a farmer and member of the state legislature. Stack died in 1865 leaving no will and commissioners were appointed to settle his estate. The commissioners reported that the mill was "in very bad repair and depreciating in value daily."¹⁰ The sale of the mill was advertised in Denton's *American Union* newspaper as well as the *Philadelphia Inquirer* and eventually sold to John Nichols.¹¹ The fourth bay, on the western side of the mill building, has been dated to this time and it is believed that Nichols repaired the crumbling mill and enlarged the building.

Nichols died only a few years later in 1873 and the property was again put up for sale in 1878. A brief article in the *Denton Journal*, June 12, 1897 states that S.L. Webster, an owner during this time, replaced the existing equipment with the Wolf roller process machinery.¹² Along with this new machinery Webster would also have replaced the aging breast shot water wheel with turbines. The large riveted iron pipe, formerly a smokestack from a mill in Federalsburg, that remains on the site today would have been used in the turbine system.¹³ Using photographic evidence as well as materials analysis it is possible to date the construction of a western lean-to addition in the late 19th century, possibly contemporary with the installation of the Wolf equipment. The lean-to can be seen in a c.1900 photo of the mill and clearly seen in a 1902 photograph in which a young, then assistant, Frank Langrell stands outside. By the late 20th century, this lean-to had deteriorated, and was replaced c. 2007 with a new addition substantially mirroring its form, which provides visitor orientation space and code-required second-story egress for the mill exhibits.

In 1914 the mill was purchased by Frank Langrell. Langrell made many improvements to the mill including, in 1918, switching the power source from turbines to a Fitz overshot water wheel installed on the south side of the building replacing the former breast shot and turbine configurations. At this point he also purchased Case roller mills from his former employer, the Williston Mill. These were likely used because their small size was better suited to the low height of the first floor than the larger Wolf mills.¹⁴ It is likely that the eastern addition, under which the flume for the overshot wheel ran, was built around the same time. Langrell also installed a diesel engine on the southwest side of the mill to augment the water power in the 1930s. The corrugated metal addition which housed this engine and has since deteriorated would clearly be contemporary with the engine. In 1972 heavy rains from Hurricane Agnes caused the breach of the mill dam. Langrell continued to operate the mill, sporadically and presumably under diesel power, until his death in 1974. The mill has sat idle since. In 2003 the mill was purchased by the Caroline County Historical Society in an effort to preserve it as a historical museum.

Across the street is the Miller's House, which was begun in c.1840, approximately the same time as the current mill. Two outbuildings, a shed and a privy, are located to the west of the house. This house has historically been the residence of the miller or owner of the mill. The smaller house across the street was built

¹⁰ Caroline Chancery Records, Liber JWT 7:9.

¹¹ Mitchell.

¹² Denton Journal, June 12, 1897, p. 2, col. 3.

¹³ McGrain

¹⁴ Hazen, Ted. Report prepared by request of the CCHS.

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around 1900 and has been referred to as the Miller's Assistant's House. This building, along with the mill and miller's house, form a complex of buildings that illustrates this historic industry and profession.

The Linchester Mill is a classic example of a larger Eastern Shore mill and is similar to many mills that existed in the region in the 19th century. Because of dampness related to their proximity to water, and the constant wear and vibration of heavy machinery, mills easily deteriorated. A mill like Linchester is extant because it was in use until only 30 years ago. Its proximity to the town of Preston probably helped it to stay in business while many other mills in more rural locales fell out of use earlier. As milling became centralized in larger more industrial facilities, Frank Langrell saw the economic benefit of milling primarily animal feed, on which there were fewer regulations than flour for human consumption. This decision also helped to keep the mill solvent and in running order through the early 1970s.

Wye Mill, in Talbot County, is a contemporary of Linchester Mill. In comparison Linchester is a much larger facility and shows a broader range of the equipment used in the history of milling.

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Geographical Data

UTM References

Preston, MD USGS quad

A: 18-422008-4283756

B: 18-421793-4283259

C: 18-421660-4283225

D: 18-421938-4283853

Verbal Boundary Description:

The property consists of the entirety of Parcels 93 and 94, and the portion of Parcel 91 that lies south of the right-of-way of Maryland Route 318/16, on Caroline County Tax Map #59.

Boundary Justification:

These boundaries encompass the resources historically associated with the mill complex within their immediate setting. The Miller's House and outbuildings are located on Parcel 94; the Miller's Assistant's House and garage occupies Parcel 93; and Parcel 91 comprises the Mill, Millrace, and the land behind the Mill along Upper Hunting Creek. The site of the mill pond, separated from the mill complex by a busy modern highway, is not included in the nominated property.