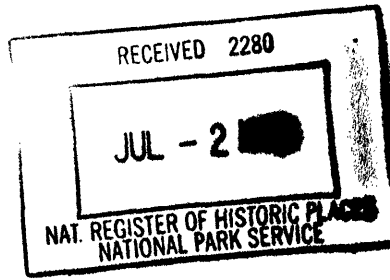


United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Registration Form



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 an 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 Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District

other names/site number N/A

2. Location

street & number Bowman Mill Rd./ Parkers Mill Rd./ Cave Hill Lane NA not for publication

city or town Lexington  vicinity

state Kentucky code KY county Fayette code 067 zip code 40513

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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.)  
David L. Morgan, SHPO and Executive Director, KHC 6-22-99  
Signature of certifying official/Title Date  
State Historic Preservation Office/Kentucky Heritage Council  
State of 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 commenting official/Title Date  
State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

- I hereby certify that the 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. Beall Signature of the Keeper Date of Action 7/28/99

**Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District**

Name of Property

**Fayette Co., Ky.**

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	
<b>7</b>	<b>14</b>	buildings
<b>2</b>		sites
<b>46</b>	<b>35</b>	structures
		objects
<b>55</b>	<b>49</b>	Total

**Name of related multiple property listing**

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

NA

**Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register**

9

**6. Function or Use**

**Historic Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Domestic/ Single Dwelling
- Agriculture/ Processing
- Agriculture/ Storage
- Agriculture/ Agricultural Field
- Agriculture/ Agricultural Outbuilding

**Current Functions**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Domestic/ Single Dwelling
- Agriculture/ Processing
- Agriculture/ Storage
- Agriculture/ Agricultural Field
- Agriculture/ Agricultural Outbuilding

**7. Description**

**Architectural Classification**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- Early Republic/ Federal
- Mid-19th Century/ Greek Revival

**Materials**

(Enter categories from instructions)

- foundation Stone
- walls Brick Wood Weatherboard
- Log
- roof Metal Asphalt
- other \_\_\_\_\_

**Narrative Description**

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

**Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District**

Name of Property

**Fayette Co., Kentucky**

County and State

**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 patterns of our history.
- B** Property is 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.)

**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 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 # \_\_\_\_\_

**Areas of Significance**

(Enter categories from instructions)

**Agriculture**

**Period of Significance**

**1890-1950**

**Significant Dates**

**N/A**

**Significant Person**

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

**NA**

**Cultural Affiliation**

**NA**

**Architect/Builder**

**Unknown**

**Primary location of additional data:**

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

Name of repository:

**Kentucky Heritage Council**

**10. Geographical Data**

Acreage of Property 1612 acres

**UTM References**

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet.)

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

3	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing
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 Helen C. Powell

organization H. Powell and Co., Inc. date March 22, 1999

street & number 509 East Maxwell Street telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town Lexington state Ky. zip code 40502

**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 \_\_\_\_\_

street & number \_\_\_\_\_ telephone \_\_\_\_\_

city or town \_\_\_\_\_ state \_\_\_\_\_ zip code \_\_\_\_\_

**Paperwork Reduction Act 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 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 Projects (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

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# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

**Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District**  
**Fayette County, Kentucky**

Section number 7 Page 1

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## SECTION 7: DESCRIPTION

### A. Summary Description of the Bowman Mill Rd. Rural Historic District

The area investigated for the Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District is located 6.5 miles southwest of downtown Lexington in western Fayette County in the Inner Bluegrass Region of Kentucky. See Figure 1 which illustrates the location of the Bowman Mill Road Historic District within Fayette County.

The Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District consists of approximately 1,612 acres in Fayette County and includes 20 properties. Within the boundaries of the rural historic district there are 55 contributing resources (7 buildings, 46 structures, and 2 sites) and 49 non-contributing resources (14 buildings and 35 structures).

See Figure 2, the Property Map, which illustrates the locations and relative sizes of the properties within in the Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District. The spatial relationships of contributing and non-contributing resources are shown on an oversize Site Map included with the nomination. The Site Map is based upon topography provided by the Lexington-Fayette Division of Planning, aerial photographs, and on-site inspections. The numbers and types of resources on each property are enumerated in Section D of the Description.

### Overview of the Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District

To the west of the Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District are Stoney Point (Fa-297) a late-eighteenth century house listed on the National Register and associated with Captain James Parker for whom Parkers Mill Road was named, horse farms, and South Elkhorn Creek. To the north are Parkers Mill Road, the rural crossroads village of Fort Spring, the Blue Grass Airport, and Versailles Road (US 60). To the east are Man O War Boulevard, Paul Dunbar High School, modern residential subdivisions, Harrodsburg Road (US 68), and the village of South Elkhorn. To the south are Military Pike, farms, and Jessamine County.

The Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District contains nine buildings and/or structures which have been previously listed on the National Register. The Abraham Bowman, Jr. House (Fa-306), carriage house, and water tower; Bowman-Woolfolk

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**Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District**  
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House (Fa-305), Bowman Cabin, smokehouse, and double-pen log barn; and Helm Place (Fa-304) were all listed in a multiple property nomination entitled the "Bowman Houses" in 1979. The William Lytle Todd House (Fa-300) was listed as an individual property in 1979. Little Georgetown, a late nineteenth century African American community to the northwest of the rural historic district was determined eligible by consensus for the National Register in 1996.

Bowman Mill Road connects Parkers Mill Road with Harrodsburg Road (US 68) in the vicinity of South Elkhorn, a historic rural hamlet which was determined eligible by consensus for the National Register in 1994. Over its route, Bowman Mill Road passes a landscape characterized as a distinct physiographic feature called the "Bluegrass Plain" by Dr. Mary E. Wharton in Bluegrass Land and Life in 1991. The Bluegrass Plain covers most of Fayette County and is characterized by a gentle to undulating broad rolling uplands landscape well-suited for pastures and other agricultural pursuits. The maximum elevation difference between ridge tops and valleys in the Bluegrass Plain is approximately 50 feet. See Figure 4 for topography of Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District.

Most of the Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District is rolling terrain which is occupied by well-tended horse farms whose pastures are defined by the traditional four-board fence and wooded fence rows. Areas near the meandering course of South Elkhorn Creek on the western edge of the district are wooded with occasional exposed rock ledges and wild flowers. Near its intersection with Harrodsburg Road, Bowman Mill Road passes through the South Elkhorn Creek floodplain before reaching the rural village of South Elkhorn. Views of the agricultural landscape along Bowman Mill Road are alternatively open and closed by fence rows and an overhead tree canopy composed of sycamores and willows in the low area along South Elkhorn Creek or walnuts, hackberries, black cherries, black locusts, and other hardwoods on the uplands.

Historically, much of the land ownership in the Bowman Mill area can be traced back to the Bowman family which is associated with three of the dwellings previously listed on the National Register (Properties #5,6,11) within the district. By 1860, however, three of the four Bowman children had sold land bequeathed to them by their father Abraham Bowman. George and Isabella Bowman sold the mill site (properties # 7,8,9) in 1857, the George Bowman House, present day Helm Place (properties # 3,5) were bought by Reed in 1859, and the Abraham Bowman, Jr. House (property #11) was

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**Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District**  
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purchased by William Talbott in 1858. The Hewitt Map of Fayette County published in 1861 (Figure 5) bears the names of the new owners.

Bowman Mill Road, also known as Ryman's Mill Road, Reed Road, and South Elkhorn Pike at various points in its history, accessed an early nineteenth century grist mill that was located in the middle of the district on South Elkhorn Creek. Present day Bowman Mill Road follows the original road alignment as it travels from the village of South Elkhorn west along the north side of South Elkhorn Creek. Where present day Bowman Mill Road turns north, leaving South Elkhorn Creek, however, Ryman's Mill Road continued due west along South Elkhorn to Ryman's Mill and then due north to Parkers Mill Road. The abandoned segment of the Ryman's Mill roadbed north of South Elkhorn Creek is bordered by dry stone fence and remains in use today as an interior farm road on property # 10. The northern segment of Ryman's Mill Road connecting to Parkers Mill Road is used as a walking trail and access to Cave Creek on property #19.

Sections of savanna woodland pasture, segments of rock fences, narrow, tree-lined lanes, and some domestic outbuildings date to the mid-nineteenth century when traditional diversified agriculture was practiced. Most of the historic agricultural resources, such as the tobacco barns and fence rows, however, date to a later period when farms in central Kentucky switched from diversified agriculture to a more profitable intensive specialized type of farming focused upon burley tobacco and livestock.

Early and mid-nineteenth century rock fences, vulnerable to deterioration caused by the natural movement of rocks during freeze-thaw cycles, were also destroyed during the transition to twentieth century agriculture. Many stone fences were crushed to make agricultural lime which was spread on fields to raise the alkalinity of the soil. Rock fences were also removed to consolidate fields for the production of tobacco or to install board fencing to define horse pastures. Two sections of rock fence remain on property #10.

### **B. Natural Elements**

#### **Soil**

The terrain along Bowman Mill Road is characterized by a gently rolling landscape. The landscape consists of rich farmland used for pastures and fields for

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Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District  
Fayette County, Kentucky

row crops with trees clustered in lowlands along South Elkhorn Creek, pre-1950 fence rows, and the few steep areas such as the one found on the south side of Bowman Mill on property #9. An area of savanna woodland pasture remains on property # 10.

The soil is described by the U.S. Department of Agriculture as the Maury-McAfee Association which is a deep or mostly deep undulating, well-drained soil found on uplands. These soils formed from the disintegration of highly phosphatic limestone, contain five to six times as much phosphorus as the soils of the balance of the state (Davis, 1927: 89). In Bluegrass Land and Life, this type of limestone soil and the water which filtered through it are described as being especially well-suited to the production of high-quality livestock. The result of a diet based upon vegetation grown from such soil and water is the tendency to form solid but light bones, strong tendons, and strong, firm, elastic muscles, all essential physiological elements for strong thoroughbred horses (Wharton, 1991:12). See Figure 3 which is a soil map of Fayette County.

Another factor contributing to the quantity and quality of herbage grown in the area is the mild climate which has a normal growing season of at least 180 days (Davis, 1927: 70).

### Water

South Elkhorn Creek, which has its headwaters approximately 3 miles east of Harrodsburg Road (US 68) on the grounds of Waveland State Historic Site, flows year round. From the Bowman Mill Road area, the creek meanders to the northwest to its confluence with North Elkhorn Creek to form the main stem of Elkhorn Creek which ultimately flows into the Kentucky River north of Frankfort.

South Elkhorn Creek's continuous flow and accessibility made it a good location for water-powered grist mills in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Four grist mills were completed in the area by 1795 including John Higbee's Mill, Col. Abraham Bowman's Mill, Jacob Ryman's Mill, and Captain James Parker's Mill (Perrin, 1882: 533). The above-ground evidence of the mills is gone from the original sites, but early twentieth century deeds for the properties between Bowmans Mill Road and South Elkhorn Creek (#7-8) refer to the mill and mill dam. Ryman's Mill was located downstream, halfway between Bowman's Mill and the Parker's Mill Road bridge. Ryman's Mill was described in 1892 as a three-story building measuring 40 feet by 20 feet ("Old Mill" Lexington Leader, 9/25/1892:9). The original owner of the mill was



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Jacob Ryman who died in 1806. His son Robert (b. 1799) was still in charge of the mill in 1892. According to historian, J. Winston Coleman, who features a photograph of Ryman's Mill in his book, Historic Kentucky, the mill building was torn down between 1905 and 1908 (Coleman, 1967: 111).

South Elkhorn Creek, its tributaries, and the multiple springs in the area were significant as sources of abundant water for the livestock which became a predominant feature of the agriculture in the Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District in the early twentieth century. The spring to the north of the dwelling on property #20 provided potable water to the residents of Little Georgetown, a small African American settlement to the west. An early nineteenth century stone springhouse remains to the north of the Abraham Bowman House (property # 10). In the early twentieth century, Edward Corrigan built a multi-story, castellated stone water tower to provide additional water for his livestock (property #10).

Early roads in Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District followed the streams as illustrated in Hewitt Map from 1861 (Figure 5) and Beers Map 1877 (Figure 6). Bowman Mill Road followed South Elkhorn Creek and another road, now abandoned, followed a tributary called Cave Creek which runs south of the William Lytle Todd House (property #15). The Todd House is oriented to Cave Creek and the former roadway rather than the present day alignment of Bowman Mill Road which runs to the east of the house.

### Topography

The landscape of the South Elkhorn area is described by nineteenth century historian Perrin in his History of Fayette County, Kentucky as undulating and gently rolling. The soil was perfect for producing tobacco, hemp, and corn. Within a few years after the initial settlement, farmers were benefitting from the harvests. Flour was shipped to New Orleans on flatboats down the Kentucky, Ohio, and Mississippi Rivers. Surplus grain was transformed into whiskey in the many distilleries that were established in the area. In fact, the manufacturing of whiskey was one of the earliest and most valuable commercial industries in the area.

The Bowman Mill Road Historic District exhibits elements of the underlying karst topography with sink holes, underground drainage, and caves (Lexington-Fayette Comprehensive Plan, 1988: 49). In 1927, Willard Rouse Jillson, the state geologist, estimated that the Inner Bluegrass had over 3,000 sinks and 1,600 square miles of

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**Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District**  
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sinkhole topography plus 75 square miles of truly karst topography with caves, sinking creeks, and subterranean streams. Cave Creek which crosses properties 14, 15, 18, 19, and 20 emerges from a cavern adjacent to Cave Place (Fa-280), a property listed on the National Register north of the district, and flows west to join South Elkhorn Creek south of Parkers Mill Road.

The sink holes in the district, visible in pastures on both present-day Jonabell Farm (properties #10, 11, 12) and Mill Ridge Farm (properties # 1-4), have gradually sloping (2 to 20%), grass covered sides. These sink holes were formed as surface water percolated downward through openings in the joints and bedding planes of the rock and dissolved the limestone. When the underlying limestone was dissolved, the resulting depressions gathered additional rainwater and became larger. The solubility of the limestone, the sinking of rainwater underground, and the underground drainage create the undulating topography (Wharton, 1991: 16-17).

The division of land into pastures in the Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District has respected the sink holes. Often pastures have sink holes in the center if the sides are gently sloping. The sink holes with steeper sides are left wooded or are fenced off from the pastures.

The rectangular tobacco barns in the district are sited upon the ridge tops with the long sides parallel to the ridges. Pre-1950, interior farm roads linking agricultural buildings and fields tend to be rectilinear to skirt the fields established for row crops and sometimes run counter to the topography.

See Figure 4 and the Site Map for the topography of the Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District.

### **C. Cultural Elements**

The cultural resources in the vicinity of Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District include historically significant early- and mid-nineteen century dwellings and agricultural resources dating from the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. William Lytle Todd House (Fa-300), Helm Place (Fa-304), Bowman/ Woolfolk Houses (Fa-305), and the Abraham Bowman Sr. House (Fa-306) are listed on the National Register. The South Elkhorn area was one of the five vicinities designated as a focus area for conservation in the 1994 Lexington-Fayette Greenspace Plan.

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### Architectural Resources

The following paragraphs provide brief descriptions of the previously identified historic sites from documentation by the Lexington-Fayette Office of Historic Preservation and the Kentucky Heritage Council in the Bowman Mill Road area. See the oversized Site Map for the locations of the sites.

#### Helm Place (Fa-304 and Property # 5)

In the winter of 1779-80, General Levi Todd built a log stockade fort on the property of the present Helm Place (Fa-304) on the north side of Bowman Mill Road. The inhabitants of Todd's Station abandoned the fortification the following year for the safety of the fort at Lexington due to the threat of Indian attack.

When Todd left Todd's Station, the land on which the fort stood passed into the hands of Colonel Abraham Bowman Sr. through a military grant. Colonel Abraham Bowman Sr., commander of the Eighth Regulars in the Revolutionary Army and surveyor, settled in Fayette County in 1781. He purchased 8000 additional acres in the vicinity of Todd's Station and married the widow of his friend David Bryan. Colonel Bowman was one of the representatives and an elector during the state constitutional convention in the 1790s. The farm was named Cedar Hill after the Bowman family farm in Virginia. During the Bowman tenure of the property, it was a large diversified agricultural operation and horse farm.

Although Abraham Bowman bequeathed a mansion to his son George in 1836, the existing dwelling on the north side of Bowman Mill Road west of the village of South Elkhorn dates from 1853 (Office of Historic Preservation, 1990: 6). Cedar Hall or Helm Place (Fa-304) is a two-story, five-bay, Flemish bond brick Greek Revival dwelling with a full height, pedimented portico supported by Ionic columns.

The house was renamed Helm Place in 1912 by later owner Emilie Todd Helm, granddaughter of Levi Todd, widow of Civil War General Benjamin Hardin Helm, and half sister of Mary Todd Lincoln. She owned the property with her two unmarried children, Benjamin Hardin Helm and Katharine Helm, a well-known artist and writer, who wrote a book documenting the true story of Mary Lincoln, her step-aunt. A formal garden west of the house was designed by Katherine Helm and Elodie Helm Lewis in the early decades of the twentieth century. Helm Place was listed on the National

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Register in 1978. In 1990, Helm Place and 53 acres surrounding it became Lexington-Fayette County's first and, to date, only rural property to have H-1 zoning or Historic Landmark Designation.

### Woolfolk House (Fa-305 and Property # 6)

On the south side of South Elkhorn Creek are a log structure built circa 1781 for Abraham Bowman Sr. and a house circa 1814-1820 (Fa-305) built for Bowman's daughter, Sally and her husband Samyel Woolfolk (Henderson, 1979:7-1).

### Abraham Bowman, Jr. House (Fa-306 and Property # 11)

On the west side of Bowman Mill Road is the house of Abraham Bowman Jr. completed between 1811 and 1818 (Henderson, 1979: 7-2). The builder's father, Abraham Bowman Sr., was a renown eighteenth century Fayette County pioneer. The castellated stone tower on the east side of the house, which served as the base for a 30-foot cypress water tank, was built by Ed Corrigan, a Chicago horseman whose horse Riley won the Kentucky Derby in 1890. During Corrigan's ownership of the farm between 1902 and 1909, it was known as Alpine Stock Farm (Mastin, 1981: B-1). The present-day Jonabell Farm dates from John A. Bell III's purchase of acreage in the area in 1954.

According to local tradition and deeds, Abraham Bowman Sr.'s grist mill was located on South Elkhorn Creek in the vicinity of properties # 7-8. The Bowman Mill was still operating in 1901 when it was purchased and overhauled by J.E. Delph in 1901(Lexington Herald 1/29/01:4). The grist mill is no longer standing today.

### William Lytle Todd House (Fa-300 and Property #15)

On the west side of Bowman Mill Road north of its crossing of Cave Creek is the William Lytle Todd House (Fa-300) which was completed in 1810 (Henderson, 1979: 7-1). The Todd House is a five-bay, two-story, Flemish bond brick structure. Todd, a member of prominent Lexington pioneer family, was the son of Robert Todd who was killed in an Indian battle in Frankfort circa 1792. Robert Todd's brother, Levi, was one of the founders of the city of Lexington and builder of Todd's Station, the fort site at Helm Place (property #5).

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### Hickey House (Fa-303 and Property # 10)

On the south side of Bowman Mill Road north of South Elkhorn Creek is a house (Fa-303), built between 1868 and 1873 by J.G. Hickey, an African American freed slave who acquired the one-acre site on which the house stands (Park and Sullivan, 1979: np). The two-story, frame house has a saddlebag plan with a centrally placed interior chimney.

### Agricultural Resources

The intent of this nomination is to recognize the historic significance of the Bowman Mill Road area beyond the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century dwellings associated with the Bowman and Todd families which are listed on the National Register by considering the significance of cultural landscape patterns associated with agriculture in Fayette County from 1890 to 1950. Elements inventoried on each property include tobacco barns, horse barns, fence rows and other agricultural structures which date from the period. Due to continuous cultivation of the rich farmland from the late eighteenth century to the present, historic remnants of earlier agricultural eras are also evident and include sections of savanna woodland pastures, stone fences, abandoned road beds, and spring houses. A property-by-property inventory depicting each type of building, structure, and site can be found in Section D.

In the area proposed for nomination, the combination of natural and human-made landscapes have created and sustained a recognizable development pattern from generalized farms to intensive specialized farms for tobacco and horses which characterized agricultural practices in the upland areas of Fayette County from 1890 to 1950. The landscape patterns can be seen in the sizes of fields, locations of fence rows and woodlands, alignments of tree-lined lanes, and reuse of agricultural structures.

Due to the intensive use of the area and technological and transportation improvements, above-ground evidence of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century grist and saw mills along the South Elkhorn Creek is absent. Archeological potential for these cultural resources exists and their locations are shown on period maps and documented in deed records. Future projects should be undertaken to investigate the South Elkhorn Creek corridor from Harrodsburg Road (US 68) to Parkers Mill Road to locate, document, and evaluate the archeological resources associated with these late eighteenth and early nineteenth century industrial sites.

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**Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District**  
**Fayette County, Kentucky**

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## **D. CULTURAL RESOURCE INVENTORY**

See the oversize Site Map which locates the historic resources on each property within the Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District.

The Cultural Resource Inventory for the 20 properties in the district indicates acreage and numbers of contributing and non-contributing buildings, structures, and sites. The following list provides a key to the abbreviations used in each category.

### Acreage

Number of acres from property listing on file at the Fayette County Property Valuation Administrator's (PVA) office

### Status

- C Contributing
- NC Non-contributing
- NR Listed on the National Register

### Key

- 1-a Indicates property number ("1") and building or structure or site ("a") on the oversize Site Map

## **INVENTORY FOR BOWMAN MILL RURAL HISTORIC DISTRICT**

The 20 properties which currently comprise the Bowman Mill Rural Historic District can be related to the seven farms listed below during the period of significance.

Properties 1, 2, 4  
Brown-Shropshire-Hieatt-Headley Farm

Properties 3, 5  
Bowman-McMeekin-Helm Farm

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Properties 6 and part of 10  
Woolfolk-Crosby Farm

Properties 7, 8,9  
Bowman Mill Property/ School Site

Properties 11, 12, and part of 10  
Bowman-Brown-Watts Farm

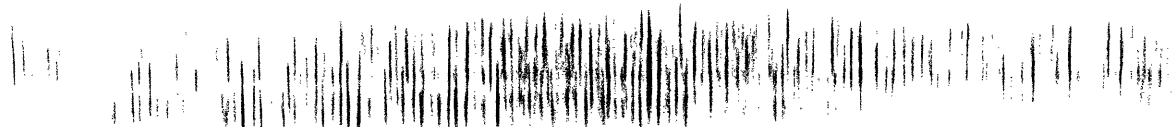
Properties 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18.  
Todd-Brown-Spears Farm

Properties 19, 20.  
Farm on Parkers Mill Rd.

Prior to each property inventory, a brief history of each farm is given. Few of the farms in the district have remained static in their size over the 60-year period of significance. In some areas of the district acreage has been consolidated to create larger farms, while in other areas larger farms have been dissolved to create smaller properties.

**Properties 1, 2, 4**  
**3422, 3414 Bowman Mill Road, 2250 Cave Hill Lane**  
**Brown-Shropshire-Heatt-Headley Farm**

Alex H. Shropshire (1839-1900) married Lucy Headley in 1864 (Perrin, 1882: 861). In 1883, Shropshire bought 132 acres from Dr. John S. Brown (properties # 10,11) (DB 66, page 464) which was combined with the 128 acres, known as the Bowman place, which his wife Lucy received from her father, Samuel Headley (DB 67, page 400). Alex H. Shropshire died in 1900 and left his farm to his wife (WB 9, page 56). Upon Lucy Shropshire's death in 1910, the 246 acres were inherited by their daughters (WB 11, page 41). William Fox Heatt purchased the acreage from the Shropshire daughters in 1911 and the farm remained in the Heatt family even after W.F. Heatt's death in 1934 (WB 16, page 423). In 1957, the Heatt children sold the land to Pierson-Headley (WB 20, page 427) which they sold the property to Hal Price



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**4. 2250 Cave Hill Lane**  
**86.957 acres**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
NC	4-a	Dwelling, post-1976
C	4-b	Tobacco barn (1910-1930), moved and converted to horse barn, post-1976
C	4-c	Tobacco barn (1910-1930), converted to horse barn, post-1962
NC	4-d	Horse barn, post-1976
C	4-e	Fence row, south property line defining pasture, pre-1950

**Properties #3, 5**  
**2721, 2575 Bowman Mill Road**  
**Bowman-McMeekin-Helm Farm**

George Bowman inherited the property from his father, Abraham Bowman, Sr. The present-day house, known as Helm Place, has been dated to 1853. In 1859, A.J. Reed (Deed book 35, page 43) purchased the property and is shown as the owner on the 1860 Hewitt Map in Figure 5. In 1873, the farm was purchased by Jeremiah McMeekin (1819-1898), who renamed the house "Cedar Hall" (Beers Map, 1879, Figure 6) and amassed 312 acres in the South Elkhorn precinct by the early 1880s (Perrin, 1882: 871). The acreage included not only the farm on the north side of Bowman Mill, but the Bowman Mill Site on South Elkhorn Creek.

In 1887, John McMeekin (1843-1892), the son of Jeremiah McMeekin, purchased 84.26 acres from his father (DB 77, page 246). John McMeekin resided in a house on nearby Harrodsburg Road which he had purchased from J.S. and Alice Burrier in 1886. John McMeekin died unexpectedly of "apoplexy" at the age of 49



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(Lexington Leader, Jan. 1892). His obituary described him as a well-known farmer and horseman.

The 80 acres associated with property #3 were sold by heir R. Estill McMeekin to G.M.D. Minor in 1905 (Deed book 138, page 514). Ira J. Waits purchased the property in 1920 from Johnson (Deed book 192, page 332 and Deed book 198, page 630) and his heirs sold it in the 1981. Property # 3 is now owned by Mill Ridge Farm (properties 1,2,4).

Property #5 was sold by heir John B. McMeekin in 1912 to Ben Hardin Helm, Emily Todd Helm, and Katherine Helm (DB 168, page 299). The farm became known as Helm Place. In 1920, the PVA records list Helm with 151.75 acres. Elodie Helm Lewis inherited the farm from Helm in 1937 (WB 23, page 236) who retained the property until 1946 when it was sold to William H. Townsend, father of the present owner.

**3. 2721 Bowman Mill Rd.**  
**80.134 acres**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
C	3-a	Tobacco barn (1910-1930), converted to horse barn, post-1962
C	3-b	Fence row along east property line, defining pasture pre-1950

**5. 2575 Bowman Mill Rd.**  
**150.986 acres**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
NR	5-a	Greek Revival residence, (Fa-304) circa 1853 built by George Bowman, son of Abraham Bowman, Sr..
NC	5-b	Modern Garage

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<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
C	5-c	Brick garden house, c. 1875
C	5-d	Tobacco barn (c. 1910-1930) moved and converted to horse barn post-1976
C	5-e	Tobacco barn, 10-bent, 5-tier rail, 1910-1930
C	5-f	Stock barn, c. 1875-1900
C	5-g	Tool shed, pre-1950
C	5-h	Todd's Station, site of pioneer fort built by Levi Todd c. 1780
C	5-i	Garden , c. 1920
C	5-j	Fence row defining east side of approach to house, pre-1950
C	5-k	Fence row dividing north field, pre-1950
C	5-l	Fence row defining domestic space associated with house, pre-1950
C	5-m	Pond, pre-1950
NC	5-n	Run-in shed, post-1976

**Property 6 and part of Property 10 to south**  
**2730 Bowman Mill Road**  
**Property 10 is described with 3333 Bowman Mill Rd.**  
**Woolfolk-Crosby Farm**

Sarah Bowman Woolfolk was given 211 acres by her father, Abraham Bowman, Sr., prior to her marriage to S.D. Woolfolk in 1814. In the 1850, US Agricultural Census,

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S.D. Woolfolk is listed as having 297 acres. The Woolfolk Farm ran from South Elkhorn Creek to present-day Military Pike. The original section of the house which is an ell in the present-day configuration faces east towards Harrodsburg Road instead of north towards Bowman Mill Road.

In 1872, Sarah Woolfolk deeded the 211 acres to W.W. Johnson, who appears to have been her second husband. In 1895, W.W. Johnson sold the 210-acre farm to J.S. and Maggie Kinkaid (DB 105, page 495) who held it until 1898, when it was purchased by H.A. and Etta C. Engman, owners until 1901.

In 1909, after multiple transfers, David Allen or D.A. Crosby (1873-1935) and Nannie Crosby, his mother, acquired 150 acres of the farm (DB 159, page 417). Crosby, a Shelby County native, was a graduate of Sims Medical School in St. Louis in 1897. Crosby never married and practiced medicine in Washington County, Kentucky until his father James A. Crosby, who was also a doctor, died in 1907. Upon the request of his widowed mother, Crosby secured a farm. In 1910, Crosby discontinued his practice of medicine, came to Fayette County, and lived on the old Woolfolk Farm on South Elkhorn. His mother, Nannie, lived at her son's country home until her death in 1917. In 1922, historian Kerr described Crosby as having a fine country home and stock farm. According to Kerr, Crosby made improvements to the farm, introducing a system and efficiency into the farming operations. Crosby was known as a breeder of and dealer in saddle horses (Kerr, 1922: IV-289 and Lexington Herald, December 24, 1935, p. 1).

Crosby also served as the president of Union Transfer and Storage Company which was incorporated in 1919 as a consolidation of all the of the transfer companies in Lexington. Union Transfer operated a fleet of trucks, provided storage for general merchandise, and handled grain and hay (Kerr, 1922: IV-289).

At the time of his death as the result of a traffic accident in St. Matthews in December 1935, Crosby still owned the farm on South Elkhorn, but his residence was listed as being 200 McDowell Road ("Dr. Davis A. Crosby", Lexington Herald, December 24).

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**6. 2730 Bowman Mill Rd.  
6.926 acres**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
NR	6-a	Brick Federal era dwelling (Fa-305), built for Sarah Bowman Woolfolk circa 1814-1820; modified circa 1890 with two-story brick north section
NR	6-b	Single-pen, half-dovetail-notched, hewn log house, circa 1781 associated with Abraham Bowman, Sr.
NR	6-c	Two-story brick smokehouse (c. 1875-1900), converted to guest house, post-1950
NR	6-d	Double-pen log barn, c. 1850-1875

**Properties 7,8,9, and part of 10  
2782, 2792, 3000 Bowman Mill Rd.  
Bowman Mill Site/ School Site**

Properties 7,8,9, and part of 10 were originally part of a 35-acre tract known as the Bowman Mill property. Deeds describing later divisions of the tract make references to the mill dam and the mill itself in the center of South Elkhorn Creek. The 35 acres were divided from the George Bowman House (Property #5) in 1857. In a subsequent transaction in 1873, an 18-acre tract was sold to Voltz (shown as Waltz on the 1879 Beers Map), a 13-acre tract sold to Dr. J.S. Brown (properties # 10,11), and the remainder to Moore. After numerous changes in title, the 18-acre tract was subdivided into two tracts (properties #7,8) by Sherrod in 1956. A half-acre tract (part of present-day property # 9) was purchased by the Trustees of the South Elkhorn District 2 of Colored Schools of Fayette County in 1888 (Deed Book 80, page 263). The Fayette School System sold the half acre tract to E.J. Allen in 1920.

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**7. 2782 Bowman Mill Rd.  
3.83 acres**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
NC	7-a	Sherrod Brick Ranch Residence, c. 1956
NC	7-b	Brick garage, post-1950

**8. 2792 Bowman Mill Rd.  
14.17 acres**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
NC	8-a	Brick Residence, post-1960.
NC	8-b	Modern metal outbuilding, post-1960
NC	8-c	Modern metal outbuilding, post-1960

**9. 3000 Bowman Mill Rd.  
.739 acres**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
NC	9-a	Modern log and stone house, post-1950

**Properties 10,11, 12  
3333,3343, 3323 Bowman Mill Rd.  
Bowman-Brown-Watts Farm**

John S. Brown (1812-1890), a native of Owen County, studied medicine at Transylvania College from 1840 to 1841. In 1865, Brown bought 252 acres from William P. Talbott (DB 40, page 429) who had purchased the farm from Abraham Bowman, Jr. in 1858 (DB 34, page 463 and Perrin, 1882: 871).

Brown assembled his "valuable farm of 444 acres" described by Perrin in 1882

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with additional purchases of 120 acres from James S. Perkins in 1868 (Deed Book 46, page 123), 50 acres from William Burrier in 1874 (Deed Book 53, page 215), 13 acres from James T. Shackelford in 1874 (Deed Book 53, page 326), and 8 acres each from Davis Murray and Margaret Hathaway in 1876 (Deed Book 55, page 506 and Deed Book 74, page 330). Brown's "Walnut Grove" had its entry near the present-day 90-degree turn in Bowman Mill Road and is shown on the 1879 Beers Map (Figure 6).

In 1883, Dr. Brown reduced the size of his farm by selling the east section of 132 acres to Alex H. Shropshire (property # 1). When Brown died in September of 1890, neighbors John S. Phelps and Alex Shropshire, who served as executors, were instructed to sell the stock, farming implements, household and kitchen furniture, and tend to the sale of growing crops of corn, hemp, and tobacco (Will Book 7, page 247).

Frank Sturgess purchased 311.93 acres of the farm in 1891. In 1902, the Brown Farm was purchased from Sturgess by Edward and Winnefred Corrigan (DB 127, page 510). Corrigan increased the size of the farm from 311 to 506 acres through the purchase of lands from the dispersal of Robert Ryman's property on the south side of South Elkhorn Creek. During Corrigan's tenure, the castellated stone water tower was completed and the property was known as the Alpine Stock Farm.

In 1909, Garrett Watts bought 506 acres from Corrigan (DB 156, page 357). Watts also owned land in other locations in the county including 250 acres on Harrodsburg Road, 162 acres on Harrodsburg Road, 262 acres on Cleveland Pike, 638 acres on Sulphur Wells and additional non-farm properties in Lexington. In his obituary in 1952, Watts was described as having been an active farmer and horseman.

John A. Bell III bought Garrett Watts's holdings in 1954 and has added acreage to create present-day Jonabell Farm.

**10. 3333 Bowman Mill Rd.**  
**741.693 acres**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
NR	10-a	Stone Water Tower, circa 1902-1909

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<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
C	10-b	Tobacco barn (1910-1930) converted to horse barn, post-1954
C	10-c	Tobacco barn (1910-1930) converted to horse barn, post-1954
C	10-d	Tobacco barn (1910-1930) converted to horse barn, post-1954
C	10-e	Tobacco barn (1910-1930) converted to horse barn, post-1954
C	10-f	Tobacco barn (1910-1930)
C	10-g	Tobacco barn (1910-1930)
1C/ 1NC	10-h	Tobacco barn (1910-1930) / modern run-in shed
NC	10-i	Horse barn, post-1952
NC	10-j	Metal shed, post-1952
C	10-k	Silo (1920-1940)
C	10-l	Silo (1920-1940)
NC	10-m	Horse barn, post-1954
NC	10-n	Horse barn, post-1954
NC	10-o	Horse barn, post-1954
C	10-p	Stone springhouse (1850-75), west of Bowman house

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<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
2 NC	10-q	Modern horse barn/ modern run-in shed, post-1976
C	10-r	Savannah woodland pasture, pre-1950
C	10-s	Small wood barn near Bowman house, 1910-1930
C	10-t	Small wood barn near Bowman house, 1910-1930
C	10-u	Small wood barn near Bowman house, 1910-1930
NC	10-v	Frame farm office, post-1976
2 NC	10-w	2 Machinery sheds, post-1976
NC	10-x	Machinery shed, post-1976
NC	10-y	Machinery shed, post-1976
NC	10-z	Run-in shelter, post-1976
NC	10-aa	Run-in shelter, post-1976
C	10-bb	Tobacco barn (1910-1930) converted to horse barn, post-1954
C	10-cc	Fence row, pre-1950
C	10-dd	Fence row, pre-1950
2 C	10-ee	Rock fence (1825-1850) and 19th century segment of Ryman's Mill Rd., re-used in present-day farm system
C	10-ff	Rock fence (1825-1850) on north property line, vicinity of Cave Creek



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<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
C	10-gg	Dwelling on Military Pike, 1.5 story, frame, c.1930-1940
C	10-hh	Hipped roof, 3-bay, frame dwelling on Bowman Mill c. 1925-1940
C	10-ii	1.5 story, 4-bay (w,w,d,w) frame saddlebag dwelling dating from ca. 1870, (Fa-303)
C	10-jj	Hipped roof frame dwelling near office, c. 1925-1940
2 C	10-kk	Side-gabled frame dwelling/ shed, c. 1930-40

**11. 3323 Bowman Mill Road**  
**11.392 acres**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
NR	11-a	Brick Federal house, 1811-1818, built for Abraham Bowman, Jr.
NR	11-b	Brick carriage house, circa 1850-1875

**12. 3343 Bowman Mill Rd.**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
2 NC	12-a-b	Log House, moved to site and reassembled post-1976 and garage, post-1976

**Properties 13, 14,15,16,17, 18**  
**3555, 3675, 3725,3815, 3899 Bowman Mill Rd., 3800 Parkers Mill Rd.**  
**Todd- Brown-Spears Farm**

The William Lytle Todd House (Fa-300), completed in 1810, is a five-bay, two-

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story, Flemish bond brick structure. Property was in the Todd family when Hewitt Map published in 1861 (Figure 5). In 1879, the Joel Higgins Farm with 98 acres is shown on the Beers Map (Figure 6) as being accessed off Parkers Mill Road.

A later owner, C.A. Howard is listed in the PVA records as having 98 acres. Between 1918 and 1923, the land changed hands several times, but stayed at 98 acres. In 1923, the farm was bought from C.T. Anderson by W. Russell Spears (1893-1955). W. Russell Spears with his brother S.W. Spears became the owners of Hickory Wood Stock Farm on the Maysville Road, upon the death of their father W.L. Spears, in 1915. Hickory Wood Farm was widely known as a general stock farm with 555 acres devoted to cattle and hogs. W. Russell Spears who married Francis Humphrey was a stockholder in Tattersalls Tobacco Warehouse (Kerr, 1922: IV-194-195).

W. Russell Spears began to assemble property in the Bowman Mill Road area with the purchase of 98 acres in 1923 (Deed Book 216, page 183). In 1931, Spears acquired additional acreage from Garrett Watts (Deed Book 272, page 318) to create a farm which totalled 189 acres. Spears's will in 1951 and obituary in 1955 indicated that he resided upon a farm on Parkers Mill Road. The farm was left to Spears's wife Frances for her lifetime. Upon Frances Spears's death in 1969, the property was divided into the tracts now included in properties 13-18 and two tracts which were incorporated into Jonabell Farm (Plat, DB 1268, page 810).

**13. 3555 Bowman Mill Rd.**  
**22.15 acres**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
NC	13-a	Residence, post-1976
NC	13-b	Horse barn, post-1976

**14. 3675 Bowman Mill Rd.**  
**10.0 acres**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
NC	14-a	Residence, post-1976

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<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
NC	14-b	Horse barn, post-1976

**15. 3725 Bowman Mill Rd.**  
**32.223 acres**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
NR	15-a	William Lytle Todd Residence, c. 1810
NC	15-b	Garage, post-1976
C	15-c	Wood shed, c. 1920-1940
C	15-d	Tobacco barn (1910-1930) converted to horse barn, post-1976
C	15-e	Stone springhouse ruin, c. 1875-1900
C	15-f	Stone abutments to bridge spanning Cave Creek, c. 1875-1900

**16. 3815 Bowman Mill Rd.**  
**20.0 acres**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
NC	16-a	Brick residence, post-1976

**17. 3899 Bowman Mill Rd.**  
**1.39 acres**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
NC	17-a	Stone residence, post-1950

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<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
NC	17-b	Frame garage, post-1950

**18. 3800 Parkers Mill Rd.**  
**46.34 acres**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
NC	18-a	Frame residence, post 1976
NC	18-b	Frame residence, post 1976
C	18-c	Board and batten stock barn (1910-1930), now horse barn

**Properties 19, 20**  
**4100, 4300 Parkers Mill Road**  
**Overstreet-Jones-Gardner Farm**

M. Overstreet is indicated as the owner of the property on the 1879 Beers Map (Figure 6). There are numerous transactions for the 77- acre farm in the early twentieth century. According to oral history, the spring in front of the house supplied potable water to the residents of the nearby village of Little Georgetown. The division of the farm into two tracts occurred in 1978 (DB 1218, page 446).

**19. 4100 Parkers Mill Rd.**  
**37.02 acres**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
NC	19-a	Stone and frame residence, c. 1978
NC	19-b	Garage, post-1978
NC	19-c	Horse Barn, post-1978
C	19-d	Fence Row, pre-1950

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<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
C	19-e	Fence Row, pre-1950
C	19-f	Section of Ryman's Mill Roadbed leading to Cave Creek, circa 1800-1825

**20. 4300 Parkers Mill Rd.**  
**48 acres**

<u>Status</u>	<u>Key</u>	<u>Brief Description</u>
C	20-a	Frame, 1-story, T-plan residence circa 1860
C	20-b	Stock barn, circa 1925-1940
C	20-c	Silo, circa 1925-1940
C	20-d	Fence row, pre-1950
NC	20-e	Metal Horse Barn built on site of an earlier barn, post-1976

**E. Registration Requirements**

For the Bowman Mill Rural Historic District, the test for determining contributing and non-contributing resources was the extent to which the resources add to our understanding of how the intensified specialized agricultural practices of the early and mid-twentieth century in Fayette County were adjusted to the natural features of the Bowman Mill Road area. The cultural features in the district which elucidate the pattern through their retention of the significant aspects of historic integrity were considered contributing, while those which disrupt the patterns or do not retain integrity were considered non-contributing.

The aspects of historic integrity which are most important for the Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District are location, setting, feeling, and association. Design, materials, and workmanship, as displayed by individual buildings, are not considered as important for communicating the historic pattern on the land as are the buildings'

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relationship to natural features or other cultural resources. Design as it relates to the overall pattern of structures, including rock fences, tobacco and horse barns, pastures, tree-lined narrow lanes, fence rows, and agricultural complexes, is important in conveying the continuity of historic land use in the Bowman Mill Road area from 1890 to 1950. Structures which have changed their use, such as the conversion of tobacco barns to horse barns, but which retain the original exterior shape, scale, and materials, are considered contributing.

### **Location**

For the Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District, location is an important aspect of integrity because the relationship of structures, roadways, fence rows, and agricultural complexes to one another and to the natural features of the area gives us a basis to compare the patterns of specialized agriculture in the Fayette County to those of earlier diversified agriculture and to agricultural patterns in other parts of the state. For example, the fields have been divided into pastures and arranged relative to sink holes and waterways to allow for the placement of tobacco barns and horse barns along the broad ridges. The property lines for more recent combinations of smaller farms to create larger farms as well as subdivision of farms into smaller ones in the Bowman Mill Road area have honored the traditional land use patterns and preserved the fence rows. Agricultural buildings which date from the period such as tobacco barns, which have been reused, but moved from their original locations are still considered contributing if the moved barn has been sited in the traditional way, atop and parallel to the broad ridges which create the rolling topography of the area.

### **Setting**

The setting of the Bowman Mill Road area is characterized by an open rolling terrain divided into the geometry of pastures by the fence rows and tree-lined lanes. This spatial quality relates to management choices made as Fayette County farmers decided to maximize profits by specializing first in tobacco and then in horses. The scale of the pastures and farm layouts have been perpetuated by the present inhabitants of the Bowman Mill Road area. Intensive agriculture, both historically and today, has been practiced on the tops and sides of the broad ridges which possess deeper soils than the sides of the stream valleys. Today this pattern is evident in the pastures on the uplands which are defined by fence rows. The farmsteads in the district which have perpetuated this management pattern would be considered contributing.

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Arrangements of buildings which do not conform to the scale or patterns of the early twentieth century would be considered non-contributing.

### **Feeling**

Bowman Mill Road, a tree-canopied lane, imparts a feeling of the scale of an early twentieth century transportation system through its narrowness and ninety-degree turn. The four-board fences which line Bowman Mill Road and the narrow interior farm lanes which define the fields also contribute to the scale and historic character of the area. Along Bowman Mill Road is an interior feeling conveyed by the physical patterns upon the land which is not disturbed by elements from the modern era. The intrusion of modern elements whose scale and placement detract from this feeling make them classified as non-contributing. The overall integrity of feeling of the district can remain even after the introduction of non-historic elements because these elements are very minor in scale compared to the overall historic patterns which are visible in the district.

### **Association**

Resources which were built during the period of significance and facilitate intensive agriculture related to either tobacco or livestock will be considered to have integrity of association. The cultivation of horses was noted an interest of both D.A. Crosby, owner of the Woolfolk-Crosby Farm from 1909 to 1935, and Garrett Watts, owner of the Bowman-Brown-Watts Farm from 1909 to 1952. The larger present-day horse farms in the district, Jonabell and Mill Ridge, date from 1954 and 1962 respectively. The present-day horse farms in the district have reused and preserved agricultural elements associated with the period of significance such as tobacco barns, spring houses, fencerows, pastures, farm lanes as well as dwellings whose construction dates range from the late eighteenth to the early twentieth century.

These resources have a direct association with the events or choices made by the farmers from 1890 to 1950 relative to the partition and management of the fertile land within the Bowman Mill Road Historic District for intensive agricultural uses. The sizes of fields, the layout of the roads, the siting of buildings reflect the period's agricultural technology and land use. The contributing fields are rectilinear in shape reflecting their original use for both row crops and pastures. The original interior road patterns of the farms reflect these shapes as they connect fields and farm buildings. The use of wood fences is traditional in central Kentucky and is shown in photographs

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of Country Estates of the Blue Grass by Knight and Greene published in 1904.

Contributing resources also include rectangular, front-gabled, wood tobacco barns whose locations atop ridges facilitate good air circulation essential first for the air-curing of burley tobacco and later significant for the health of horses. The reuse of tobacco barns as horse barns was facilitated by the tobacco barns' dimensions and the placement of the load-bearing posts. The tobacco barns which have been converted to horse barns have retained the vertical board exterior, central aisle, and entries in the gable ends.

Combinations of man-made and natural elements such as mature trees growing along fences to create fence rows are also contributing. The trees, wild black cherries, black locusts, hackberry, and walnut date from pre-1950 prior to the advent of string-trimmers and other modern methods of maintenance which today eliminate tree saplings grown from seeds dropped by birds and other animals. The trees which have grown along the fences also serve as a visual separation between pastures and provide shade.

Non-contributing buildings and structures include modern metal sheds, concrete-block barns, and brick ranch dwellings and garages completed after the period of significance.



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Figure 1: Location Map

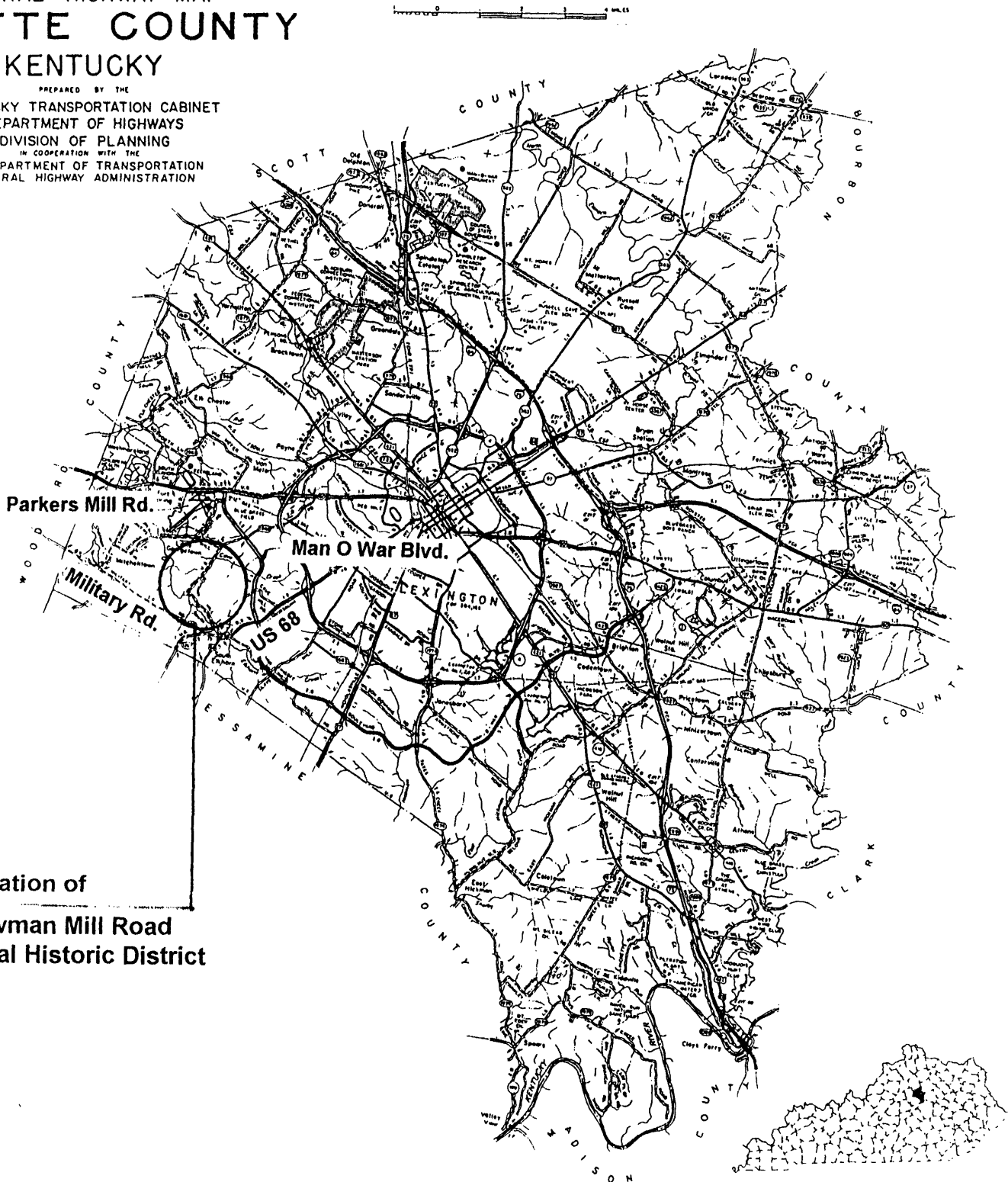


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## GENERAL HIGHWAY MAP FAYETTE COUNTY KENTUCKY

PREPARED BY THE  
KENTUCKY TRANSPORTATION CABINET  
DEPARTMENT OF HIGHWAYS  
DIVISION OF PLANNING  
IN COOPERATION WITH THE  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION  
FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION



Location of  
**Bowman Mill Road**  
**Rural Historic District**

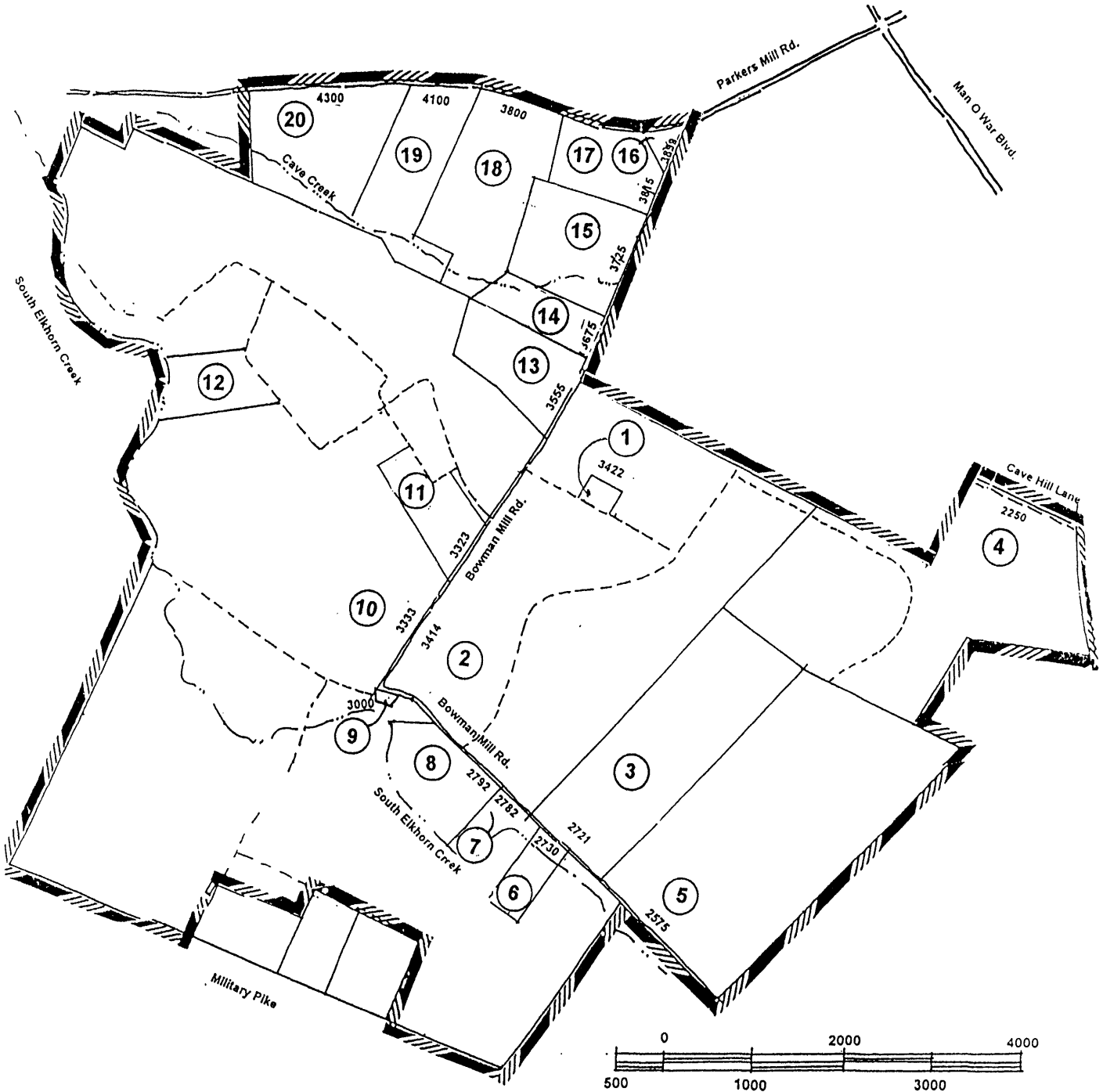
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Figure 2: Property Map

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Figure 3: Soil Map

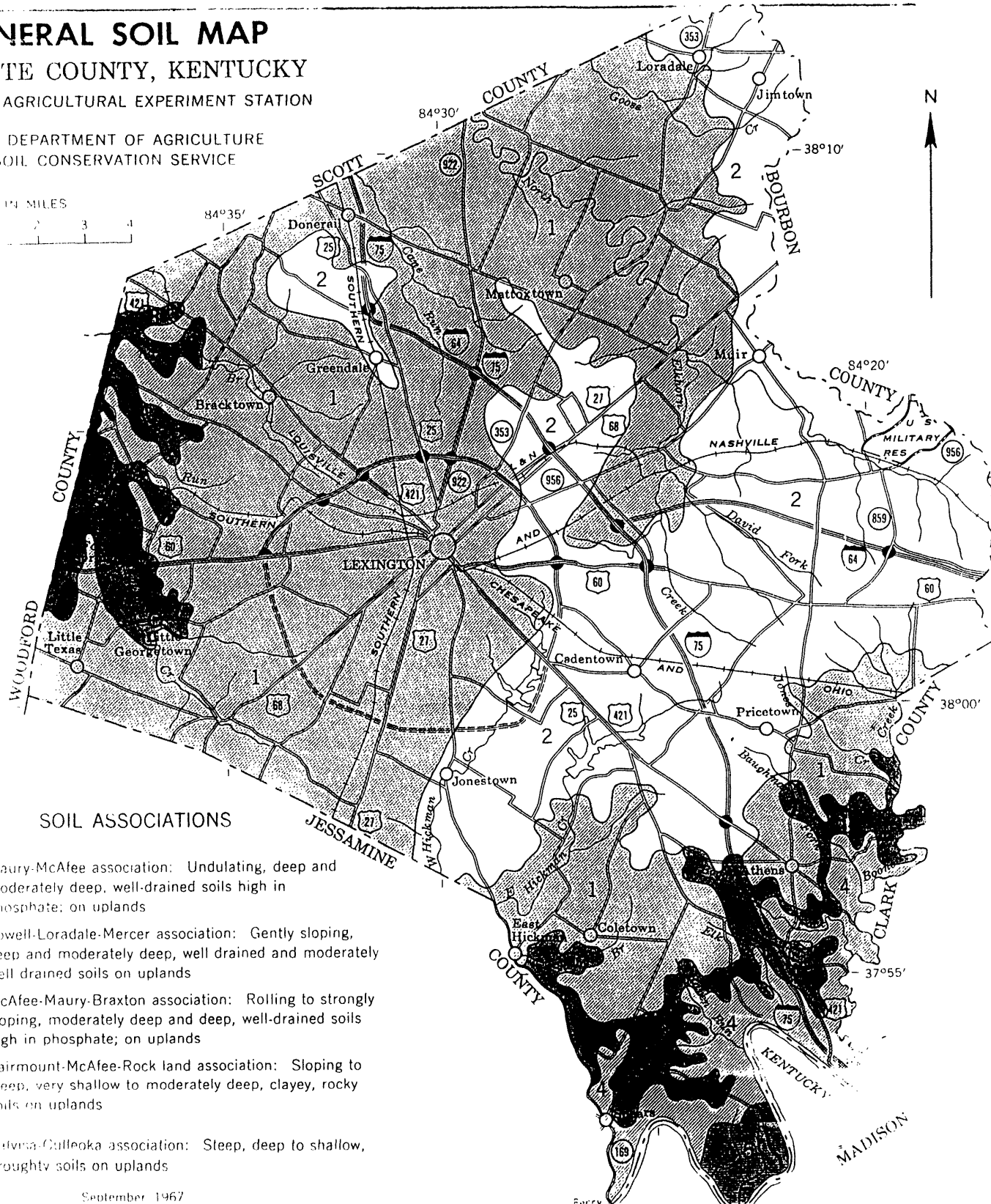
**Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District**  
Fayette County, Kentucky

## GENERAL SOIL MAP

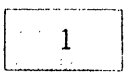
FAYETTE COUNTY, KENTUCKY  
KENTUCKY AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
SOIL CONSERVATION SERVICE

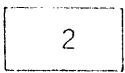
SCALE IN MILES



### SOIL ASSOCIATIONS



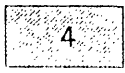
Maury-McAfee association: Undulating, deep and moderately deep, well-drained soils high in phosphate; on uplands



Lowell-Loradale-Mercer association: Gently sloping, deep and moderately deep, well drained and moderately well drained soils on uplands



McAfee-Maury-Braxton association: Rolling to strongly sloping, moderately deep and deep, well-drained soils high in phosphate; on uplands



Fairmount-McAfee-Rock land association: Sloping to steep, very shallow to moderately deep, clayey, rocky soils on uplands



Salina-Culleoka association: Steep, deep to shallow, droughty soils on uplands

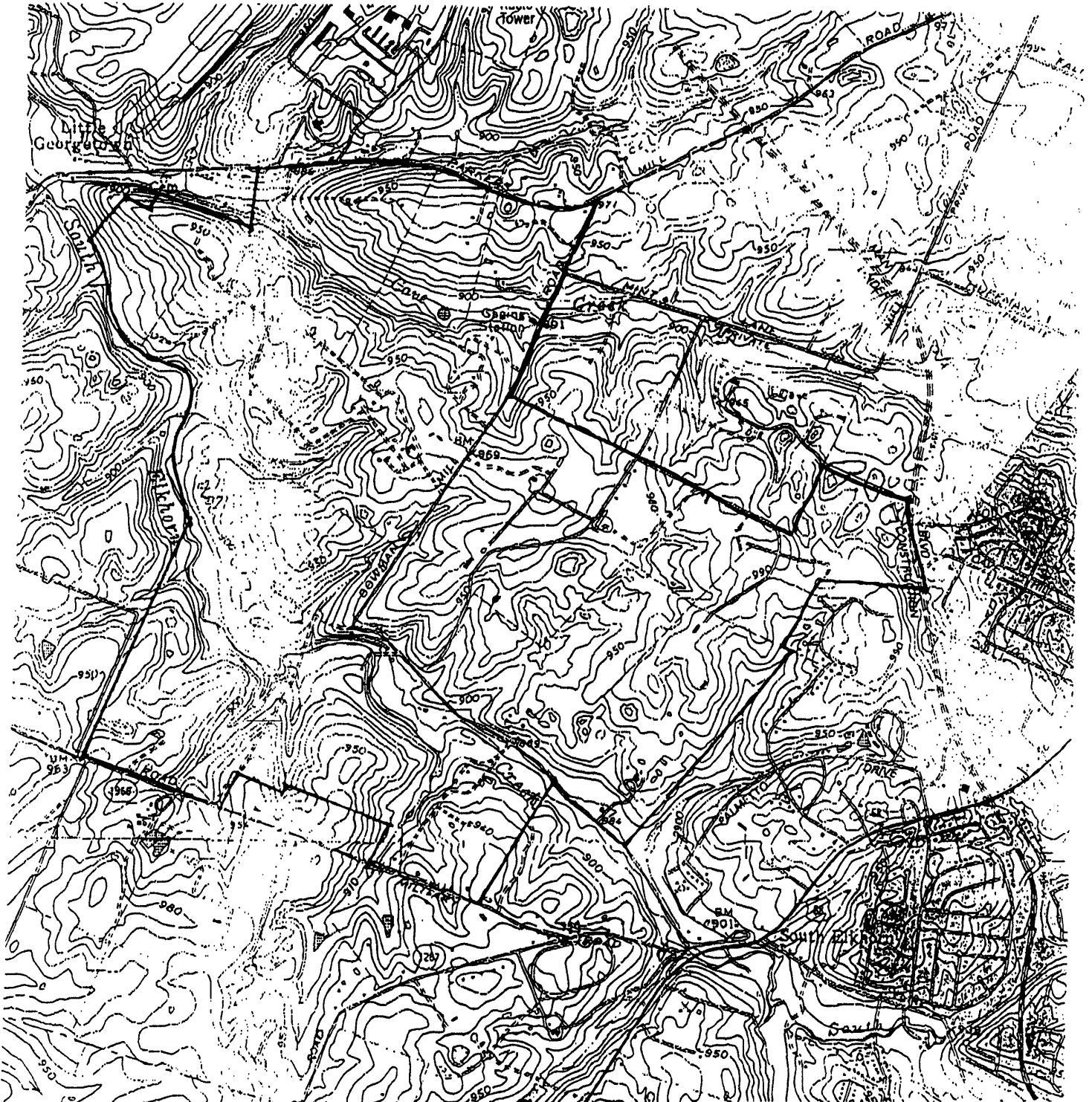
# National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

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Figure 4: Topography

Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District  
Fayette County, Kentucky



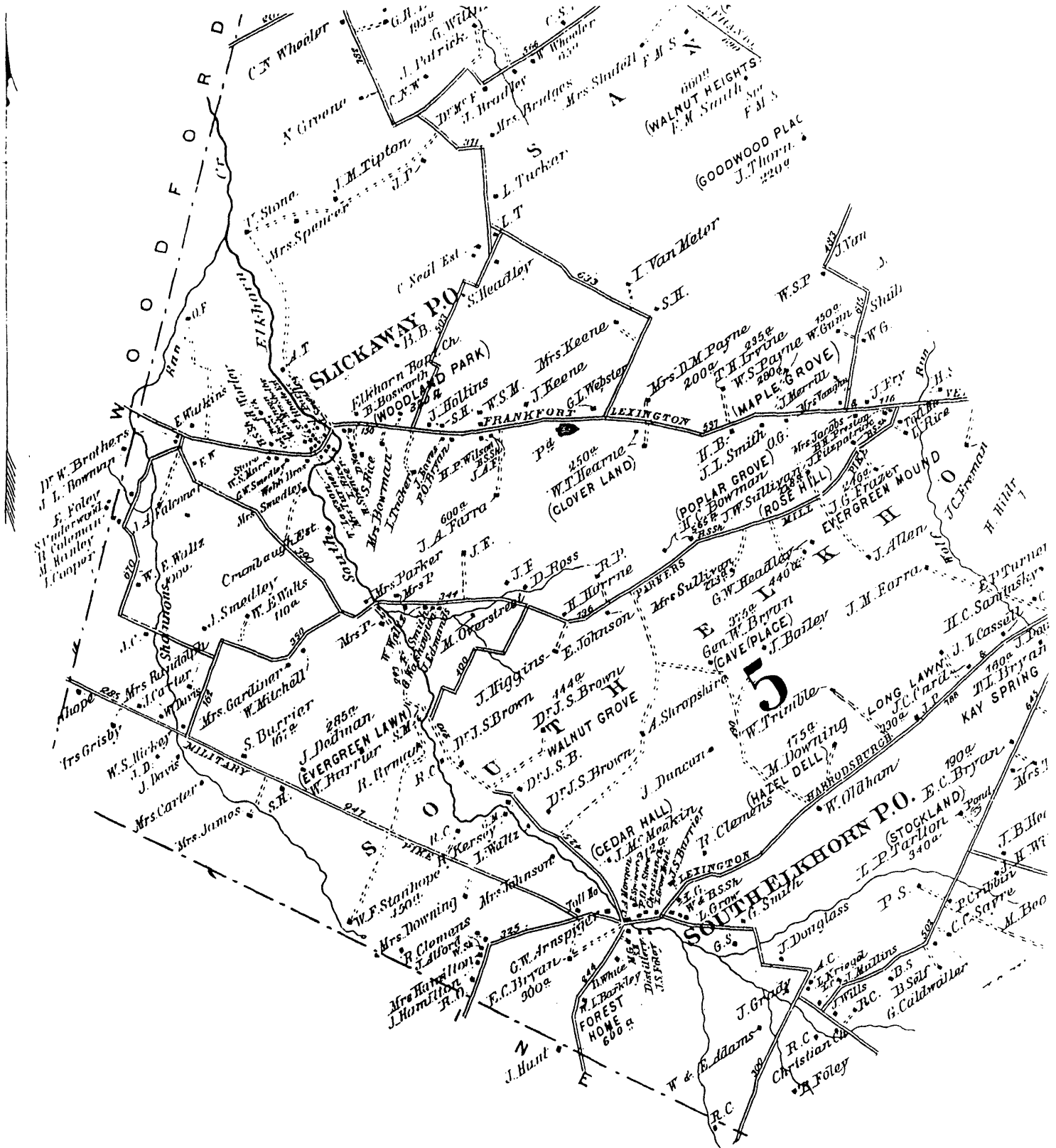
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Figure 6: Beers Map of Fayette Co., 1877  
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**Fayette County, Kentucky**

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## **SECTION 8: SIGNIFICANCE**

The Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District meets criterion A within the theme of agriculture during the period from 1890 to 1950 and meets criterion C as a significant and distinguishable entity, a rural historic district. The cultural resources including the pastures, tobacco barns, pastures, patterns of land use within the Bowman Mill Road area expand our understanding of how agriculture has shaped the landscape of the Bowman Mill area. The district as a whole maintains excellent integrity of location, setting, feeling, and association. The buildings, structures, and sites within the district are associated with events and decisions that have created land use and spatial patterns which are distinctive to Fayette County. The district is especially significant within the context "Agricultural Development of Fayette County, Kentucky, 1890-1950."

Historic Context: Agricultural Development of Fayette County, Kentucky, 1890-1950

### Research Design

Multiple sources were consulted to construct a history of Fayette County agriculture during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, which is the context within in which to evaluate the significance of the Bowman Mill Road Historic District. Initial research involved consulting the Kentucky Heritage Council's Inventory of Historic Sites, Amos' Bluegrass Cultural Landscape study, four previous rural historic district nominations for Fayette County, and published histories of the county. In these sources, with the exception of the historic district nominations, agriculture as a historic theme has been given less attention than settlement, politics, or architecture. On the county level the consultant sought information on types of agricultural products, both livestock and crops, produced, as well as trends over the decades during the period of significance. The consultant also wanted to see how the effort to produce these agricultural products had influenced land use patterns and the construction of storage and processing facilities on farms in the Bowman Mill Historic District. Finally the consultant wanted to learn how the histories of the individual farms reflected or contrasted with the overall agricultural history of the county.

The U.S. Census reports from 1890 to 1950 provided information on farm sizes, production of grains, tobacco, and livestock on the county level. The Kentucky Department of Agriculture Annual Reports and Kentucky Agricultural Statistics provided additional information about Fayette County agriculture. For comparison with the farms'

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histories along Bowman Mill, the consultant organized the information such as production rates of bushels of corn from the U.S. Census records into matrices reflecting the census years and relevant information. A very useful publication which discussed agricultural trends in Fayette County and the surrounding counties was The Geography of the Blue Grass Region of Kentucky by Darrell Haug Davis published in 1927 by the Kentucky Geological Survey.

The U.S. Census statistics for agriculture for Fayette County over the period from 1890 to 1950 were studied to determine how farm sizes, percentage of improved land, and the agricultural products of Fayette County changed over the period. The production of some agricultural products increased in Fayette County over the period from 1890 to 1950 while others decreased. Crops important throughout the period were corn, tobacco, and hay. Other categories such as fruit production, for example, were never important commodities for Fayette County, either for economic value or impact on the land, and were not included in the analysis. Livestock such as horses, mules, cattle, sheep, and swine were considered significant. The agricultural statistics from the U.S. Census were compiled into Tables 1 through 5 to facilitate comparisons of Fayette County's production in each category for successive census years.

Farm-by-farm U.S. Census enumerations for Fayette County were done in 1850, 1860, 1870, but ended after 1880. To find information on the individual farms' production within the district during the period from 1890 to 1950, the following agencies and resource people were consulted: Bill Richardson, Librarian for State Publication and Jim Prichard, Librarian in the Kentucky Room at the Kentucky Department of Libraries and Archives; Tony Powell, Agricultural Librarian, Agriculture Resource Center and staff of Special Collections, University of Kentucky; Leland Brown, Kentucky Agricultural Statistics; Alice Baesler, Kentucky Department of Agriculture; Bettie Kerr, Office of Historic Preservation, Lexington-Fayette County; and consultants Chris Amos, Carolyn Murray-Wooley and Trace Kirkwood.

The only records on individual farms in the Bowman Mill area which were found from this search were the tax records from Fayette County (present day Property Valuation Administrator or PVA records), available at the Department of Libraries and Archives. These records are organized by either election or tax precinct, with an alphabetical listing of property owners. The deeds in the Fayette County Courthouse were used to identify farm owners during the period from 1890 to 1950 in the district, making the PVA information accessible.

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The PVA records of course do not provide a complete picture of the farming operations over the period. In the earlier years examined, 1900 and 1910, the tax records cover the size of the farm, value of the land, value of improvements, pounds of tobacco produced, tons of corn, type of livestock as well as personal property including musical instruments and paintings. The later PVA records only list acreage and value of improvements. To gain a more complete view of the historic nature of the district's farms, the PVA information which was available on each property was combined with the census information, obituaries or other newspaper accounts relative to the farm owners, along with brief biographies found in histories of Fayette County by Perrin published in 1882 and Kerr published in 1922. The buildings, roads, and field patterns in the present-day Bowman Mill Road area were compared to aerial photographs of the area from 1937 and 1952 on file in the archives of City of Lexington.

The records simply do not provide continuous coverage of the agricultural products over the period of significance for each farm, but a combination of the pieces of history from the PVA records, census, and newspaper articles about each farm allows the Bowman Mill District to provide notable insights into the history of Fayette County agriculture beyond the dry statistics of the U.S. Census data.

### Number and Sizes of Farms in Fayette County 1890-1950

The percentage of land in farms is higher for Fayette County for the period from 1890 to 1950 than for the state of Kentucky as a whole. Fayette County and the Bluegrass counties tended to have between 93 to 96 per cent of their land area in farms in the census years from 1890 to 1950, while the averages for other Kentucky counties during the same period were 84 to 86 per cent. See Table 1. By 1992, Fayette County had dropped to 135,923 acres in farms, or approximately 79 per cent of its land area, due to urban expansion into former agricultural areas. Urban encroachment around the Bowman Mill Road area can be readily seen on the Site Map. To the north are the modern Bluegrass Airport, National Guard Armory, Police Firing Range, and airport-related industries. To the northeast are Man O War Boulevard, Paul Dunbar High School and Beaumont development. To the east and south are the single family homes of the Palomar Hills, Olde Bridge and Firebrook Subdivisions.

The total number of farms in Fayette County increased 17 per cent from 1890 to 1900 and another 12.8 percent from 1900 to 1910 with a total increase of 340 farms over the period. From 1910 to 1920 was an increase of 40 per cent, with 573 additional



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farms most of which were less than 10 acres. The increase in number of farms which occurred in practically all Kentucky counties until 1900, involved very little, if any extension of the area included in farms. The increase in numbers of farms was due to the subdivision of existing farms with the corresponding reduction in size of the individual farm.

Statewide, the greatest increase in numbers of farms occurred in the Bluegrass, with changes from 84 to 104 per cent over the period. Outside the Bluegrass region, Kentucky counties experienced a growth rate among the number of farms of 1 to 10 per cent. The difference in the rate of increase was due to topography and soil conditions. With the high fertility of the soil, favorable topography, and high percentage of improved land found in the Bluegrass, a small farm was an economic possibility, with tobacco as the major crop (Davis, 1927: 55).

In the Bowman Mill area, however, the sizes and numbers of farms remained relatively stable over the period. In 1920, the Bowman-McMeekin-Helm Farm (150 acres), the Brown-Shropshire-Hieatt-Headley Farm (246 acres), and the Todd-Brown-Spears Farm (98 acres) were the same size they had been in 1890. The Bowman-Brown-Watts Farm, which was 312 acres upon Dr. Brown's death in 1890, was increased to 512 acres by Edward Corrigan after 1902. The 35-acre Bowman Mill Site, subdivided in 1873 into an 18-acre tract and several smaller tracts, did not change. The only major reduction in farm size occurred on the Woolfolk-Crosby Farm, which had been reduced from 211 acres in 1890 to 150 acres when purchased by D.A. Crosby in 1909.

From 1920 to 1935, the number of farms in Fayette County decreased by 271, or 14 per cent. Between 1935 and 1940, the number of farms decreased again by 509, or 30 per cent. Decrease in the total number of farms during this period and the increasing size coincides with Depression-era agricultural practices which tended to pull areas out of production and consequently displaced tenant farmers. In 1950, however, the number of farms had increased to 1,413, with the average size of 114 acres. Between 1950 and 1992, the number of farms had decreased 40 per cent to 836 farms with the average size increased to 176 acres. See Table 2.

In the Bowman Mill area, the farms remained the same sizes they had been in 1920 over the period. Ownership of these farms remained constant with one owner or one owner and descendants. Examples include: Garrett Watts (1909 to 1952),

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Benjamin Helm and descendants (1912 to 1946), D.A. Crosby (1909 to 1935), W.F. Hieatt and descendants (1910-1957) and W. Russell Spears (1923-1955).

From 1900, when there were 1245 farms, the number of farms decreased by 47 farms, or approximately 4 percent, in 1940. In 1940, for most categories, the percentages remained close to what they were in 1900. The number of farms less than 100 acres doubled, as did the number of farms greater than 1000 acres. The increase in the number of 10-acre farms could have been due to increased suburbanization of the Fayette County rural areas accessible via automobile. The increased number of larger farms indicated the trend for the specialized farms, especially horse farms, to combine farms. See Table 3.

With the exception of the Woolfolk-Crosby Farm (property #6) and the 35-acre Bowman Mill Site (properties #7,8,9), the farms in the Bowman Mill Road District were roughly the same size or larger in 1950 than they were in 1890. The tendency for the farms in the Bowman Mill area to maintain the larger acreages from the late nineteenth century even when profitable tobacco crops could be raised on smaller acreages indicated the continuing willingness for farmers to retain large areas of meadows or pastures for the grazing of stock throughout the period of significance.

### Prices of Land

Between 1850 and 1890, the average price of land in Kentucky increased \$10.17 per acre or 76 per cent. Between 1900 and 1920, the increase was \$43.01 per acre or 247 per cent. In the central Bluegrass region, the increase was \$159.99 per acre, an increase of 340 per cent primarily due to the profitability lent to small acreage by white burley tobacco (Davis, 1927: 53-55). In 1931, the U.S. census showed Fayette County farms to be the most valuable in the state. Fayette County farms were worth \$41,850,391 followed by Jefferson County at \$31,641,385 and Bourbon County at \$27,850,860.

In 1900, in the Bowman Mill Road area, the price of land per acre as evaluated by the PVA, varied from \$60.28 for the Woolfolk-Crosby Farm (property #6), to \$67.52 for the Brown Farm (properties #10-12), to \$76.53 for the Todd-Brown-Spears Farm (properties #13-18). According to the US Census in 1900, the average price of an acre of farmland in Fayette County was \$67.26. One possible explanation for the differences in values in the Bowman Mill area could have been the locations of the farms relative to

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topography. The Woolfolk-Crosby Farm is located along South Elkhorn Creek. Compared to the other farms in the area, the Woolfolk Farm contained a higher percentage of wooded land adjacent to the creek. The floodplain land near the creek was fertile, but was better suited for crops of corn than for tobacco, the main cash crop of the era. The Bowman-Brown-Watts Farm contained some floodplain, but also a higher percentage of well-drained upland soil which was well-suited for tobacco. The Todd-Brown-Spears Farm contained mostly upland soils, all suitable for tobacco.

By 1920, the PVA valued the Bowman-McMeekin-Helm Farm (properties #3,5) at \$110 per acre, but the Woolfolk-Crosby Farm (property #6) had a value of \$100 per acre. The Bowman-McMeekin-Helm Farm contained minimal floodplain and a high percentage of upland soil. During the Depression in 1930, the Bowman-McMeekin-Helm Farm (properties # 3,5) was devalued to \$105 per acre. During the same period, the Todd-Brown-Spears Farm (properties #13-18) was valued at \$110 per acre and the Bowman-Brown-Watts Farm (properties #10-12) had a value of \$115 per acre. Among these farms with upland soils, the determining factor for value may have been number of improvements such as tobacco barns standing on the farm. On present-day Jonabell Farm, which includes the Bowman-Brown-Watts Farm, are numerous tobacco barns which date from the period.

### Land Use Fayette County Farms

Throughout the period from 1890 to 1950, Fayette County farms averaged between 90.8 and 96 per cent improved land while the state as a whole averaged 65 per cent. See Tables 1 and 2. In 1897, the Biennial Report noted that the forest growth of Fayette County had been principally destroyed, first for the raising of hemp and later for tobacco (Biennial Report, 1897: 44). By 1927, Davis figured that practically all the unimproved land on farms was either not suited for agriculture due to topography or was composed of soils which were too thin for successful crop production (Davis, 1927: 40).

The percentages of woodland for the farms along Bowman Mill Road vary according to each farm's relationship to South Elkhorn Creek, an area which has been traditionally left wooded. The Woolfolk-Crosby Farm (property #6) located along the creek was listed as having 70 of its 270 acres in woodland in the late nineteenth century while the more upland Bowman-McMeekin-Helm Farm (property #5) had 175 acres in pastures or meadows, 30 acres in woodlands, and 137 unimproved acres.

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Within the boundaries of Fayette County farms, a high percentage of improved land (approximately 68 to 71 percent) has been traditionally devoted to pasture, rather than to cropland or other uses as shown in the figures from 1930 to 1940 in Table 1. On the farms in the Bowman Mill Road area, pasture land has been preserved and is still be used for the production of livestock, primarily horses.

### Agricultural Products of Fayette County 1890-1950

An analysis of the agricultural statistics for Fayette County from the U.S. Census reveals 1890 to have been a pivotal point. Before 1890, most farms were diversified. In the 1880s, the historian Perrin described Fayette County as having diversified farms which had abundant yields of all the crops grown in the state. In 1880, the Bowman-McMeekin-Helm Farm (properties #3,5) utilized 80 acres to grow 1000 bushels of wheat, 40 acres to grow 1400 bushels of corn, 12 acres to produce 3 tons of dew-rooted hemp, in addition to 20 tons of hay and livestock.

After 1890, Fayette County farms began the transition into intensively specialized farms, which seems to have been completed in the 1930s and 1940s. Another factor in 1890 was the future economic depression of 1892. A foreshadowing of the depression can be seen in newspaper commentary about the sale of Dr. J.S. Brown's farm (properties #10-12) in 1890. The newspaper article proclaimed that Brown's farm was one of the best farms in the county and well-adapted for agricultural use. Apparently the prices for such farms were tending downward, due to the low prices for cattle and sheep then and in previous years ("John S. Brown Farm Sold", Lexington Leader, 9/8/1890, p. 5). See Tables 4 and 5 which use U.S. Census information to chart the types and production of various crops and livestock in Fayette County from 1860 to 1940.

### Crops: Hemp, Tobacco, Corn and Other Cereals

Prior to 1855, the hemp business or the manufacture of bagging and cordage was most important industry in Fayette County (Perrin, 1882: 213). Hemp was shipped downstream to New Orleans as early as 1790 to supply sails and rigging for the navy ships. In 1793, the invention of cotton gin stimulated cotton production in the south and created a demand for hemp which was used in the manufacture of bagging for the cotton (Wharton, 1991: 47). After the Civil War, the destruction of the cotton economy in the South reduced the demand for hemp. Competition from more durable, less labor-

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intensive fibers grown in other places also weakened the hemp market. In 1890, Fayette County was the largest producer of hemp in the state of Kentucky with 6,394 acres producing 2773 tons. After its peak in 1868, production of hemp declined to the point that the crop was not listed in the 13th U.S. Census of Agriculture in 1910 (Davis, 1927 :79).

To fill the cash-crop niche left vacant by hemp, the farmers along Bowman Mill Road and their counterparts in the rest of the Inner Bluegrass chose white burley, a new tobacco hybrid especially well-suited to limestone soils. By 1877, tobacco prices per pound for white burley were double and triple that of dark or yellow tobacco grown in the western part of the state.

In Fayette County in 1890, 2169 acres produced 2,638,272 pounds of tobacco, showing that it was well on its way to becoming Fayette County's main cash crop. After the turn of the century, economics encouraged further cultivation of tobacco acreage. Tobacco has remained a significant crop. 1995, Fayette County ranked second in the state in the production of 8,391,000 pounds of burley tobacco.

In 1913, the price of tobacco averaged 12.315 cents per pound and rose to 45.48 cents per pound in by 1919. For farmers, this was almost a tripled revenue with unchanged production costs. The profits from growing tobacco were great and encouraged increased land prices (Davis, 1927: 63). As a result, Fayette County production increased from 7,155,087 pounds in 1910 to 17,358,339 pounds in 1920. As profits peaked circa 1920, farmers devoted more acreage to cultivation and built more barns to house the crop. A large 10-bent, 5-tier rail tobacco barn was built by Ben Hardin Helm during this period on the Bowman-McMeekin-Helm Farm. According to Genieve Murphy, the present owner of the farm, B.H. Helm was very bitter about the quotas and allotments limiting tobacco production which were imposed by the federal government in the 1930s.

The earliest loose leaf tobacco warehouse was established in Lexington in 1904. Prior to that date, tobacco was put into hogsheads and marketed in Louisville and Cincinnati (Davis, 1927: 98). By 1910, Lexington had two tobacco factories manufacturing the smoking and chewing brands of tobacco, and four cigar factories. An additional plant manufactured tobacco hogsheads for shipment of the crop to market. In Lexington also were seven loose leaf tobacco warehouses with a capacity for sales of ten million pounds of tobacco per week (19th Biennial Report: 259). During the seasonal market in the winter of 1909-1910, 21 million pounds of tobacco were sold in

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Lexington, leading a state agriculture publication to proclaim that Fayette County was the greatest burley market in the world (19th Biennial Report: 259). By 1938, Lexington had 24 commercial tobacco warehouses which could house 10,000,000 pounds of tobacco at one time and handle 80,000,000 pounds per season (Anderson, 1938: 16).

Tall, black, rectangular, vertically-sided wood barns with room in the gables for layers of tier rails upon to hang the tobacco were built on the ridges and oriented to the prevailing wind for the air circulation necessary to cure the crop. After the tobacco was cured, it was taken down and stripped in rooms attached to the barns. Leaves were tied into bundles for shipment to market. Today 17 tobacco barns still punctuate the landscape of the Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District and are the most prevalent type of agricultural building. Even though most of the tobacco barns have been converted to horse barns, they retain the elements of the traditional design and siting which maximized the environmental conditions for the curing of the tobacco.

Tobacco was as labor intensive as hemp had been, but the new white and black share cropping system filled the labor void created after emancipation. The tenant farmers who did the cultivation, topping, and harvest of tobacco worked on land they did not own and shared a small portion of the profit with the landowner. Prior to 1900, tenancy in the Bluegrass counties did not notably exceed that of other Kentucky counties. After 1900, tenancy increased rapidly so that the average for the bluegrass counties was 40.4 per cent of farmers compared to a statewide average of 33.4 per cent (Davis, 1927: 65). Most tenants were not residents on the land on which they worked and were known as "croppers". Tenants did not become land owners due to the high cost of land (Davis, 1927: 67).

Buildings which could have been tenant houses can be seen on earlier U.S.G.S. maps of the Bowman Mill area. No dwellings remain in these locations today. The lack of tenant houses in the district is possibly due to the impermanence of the materials typically associated with the construction of tenant houses which was difficult to maintain. Within the district today there are houses provided for the farm managers, but the majority of the other farm workers live elsewhere and commute to work.

In Fayette County, corn has been grown more extensively than the other cereal crops of wheat, rye, oats, or barley. In 1919, corn comprised 78 per cent of the total crop as measured in bushels. The bluegrass area led the state in the production of hay crops both in the amount of land devoted to production and in yield per acre. The fertile

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soils derived from limestone of a high phosphatic content yield abundantly. The average production in tons per acre for tame grasses in central Kentucky averages 1.14 tons against a state average of 1.03 tons. Most of the hay was fed to livestock. The remaining hay was baled and sold as a cash crop (Davis, 1927: 83). In 1900 Sturgess, owner of the Brown-Watts Farm (properties 10-12), produced 960 bushels of corn, 17 tons of hay, and 200 bushels of oats on his 312 acres illustrating the concentration on corn production prevalent during the period (PVA records, 1900).

### Livestock: Cattle, Mules, Swine, Sheep, and Horses

In 1890, Fayette County with a valuation of \$15,060,830 for land, buildings, and fences, ranked second in the state to Jefferson County (Louisville) which had a valuation of \$17,270,260 for the same category. Jefferson County's value of farm products exclusive of livestock was \$1,948,910 compared to Fayette's amount of \$1,547,730. In the value of livestock, however, Fayette County was already demonstrating pre-eminence. Fayette County's value of livestock in 1890 was the highest in the state with \$4,215,460 compared to \$1,562,460 for Jefferson County (U.S. Agricultural Census, 1890).

In 1890, Fayette County ranked fourth in the state of Kentucky in total numbers of cattle. Of the 14,138 head enumerated, 923 or 6.5 per cent were purebred, an interest in bloodlines and breeding of fine stock which Fayette farmers shared with Bourbon County farmers. Bourbon County, which led the state in 1890 with a total of 20,081 cattle, listed 1,285 as pure bred, approximately 6.3 per cent of the total. Hardin County with 17,372 listed only 157 as purebred and Daviess County with 16,179 only listed 113 purebred (U.S. Agricultural Census, 1890).

With the expansion of America's western frontier after the Civil War, the Inner Bluegrass farms ceded their preeminence as a home for feeder cattle to the mid-western states. Bluegrass farmers profited by supplying blooded bulls and cows, primarily "Bates" short-horns for both milk and beef, as "seed-stock" to the midwestern herds until the Depression of 1892 severely damaged the market. When the cattle market recovered, the "Bates" short horn no longer provided all of the products. Jersey and Holstein cows produced milk and Scotch short horn, Aberdeen Angus, and Herefords supplied beef (Anderson, 1938: 16).

In 1920, there were 5494 beef cattle in Fayette County or 20.4 beef cattle per

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square mile as compared to a statewide average of 10.7 per square mile. Other bluegrass counties of Bourbon, Madison, and Clark exceeded Fayette with 36.1, 34.7, and 31.1 beef cattle per square mile respectively (Davis, 1927: 107-108). In 1920, Fayette County had 26.3 dairy cattle per square mile compared to the state average of 16.4. Dairy cattle were more prevalent closer to large urban areas, however. Kenton and Kenton Counties, suburbs of Cincinnati, had 52.8 and 41.0 dairy cattle per square mile respectively.

The climatic conditions of Fayette County enabled good yields of corn and a large quantity of fodder or silage. The long growing season enabled Blue Grass pastures to furnish good grazing for large part of the year. Stock barns for cattle were not numerous in Fayette County due to the traditional practice of wintering stock outside instead of in barns (Amos, 1990: np). Fayette County's location was significant. It was near southern states from which to purchase cotton and seed meal as well as cattle markets in Louisville, Cincinnati, and Chicago which were the outlets for finished stock (Davis, 1927: 107-108).

Over the course of the first half of the twentieth century, the total number of cattle on Fayette County farms increased from 11,221 in 1900 to 17,350 in 1940. In the late nineteenth century, farmers sold livestock to speculators who had animals driven to the railroad in Lexington to be shipped to markets in Chicago and Cincinnati. In 1921, the opening of a local auction house for all types of livestock, cattle, hogs, and sheep, enhanced livestock production in Fayette County. The farmer trucked his livestock to the local market, where the animals were graded according to weight and quality and then sold by open, competitive bidding. When the market began in 1921, 7,710 head of stock were sold. In 1937, 376,000 head of stock were auctioned locally (Price, 1938: 41).

Over the same time period, the number of mules and asses decreased significantly, from 10,735 in 1900 to 1,320 in 1940 (U.S. Agricultural Census, 1900, 1910, 1940). In 1897, the Biennial Report for the state of Kentucky said that Kentucky breeders of jacks and jennets enjoyed a national reputation for fine stock. The animals were shipped to almost every state in the union where the best mules were sought. "To call a mule 'a Kentucky mule' was to add several dollars to his value" (12th Biennial Report: xi). The decline in mules and asses which were bred and sold locally and to southern markets as draft animals for the cultivation of tobacco, cotton, and sugar suggests the ascendancy of mechanization on farms, specifically the increasing



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availability and use of tractors.

Swine which had reached numbers as high as 30,257 in 1860 declined gradually to 9,101 by 1940. Sheep which reached an all-time high of 45,149 in 1860 declined in numbers over the period. About Jeremiah McMeekin, a late nineteenth century owner of Helm Place (property #5), historian William Perrin said that "sheep were the prime object on his farm" (Perrin, 1882: 861). According to the 1880 census, McMeekin had 600 sheep, 240 lambs, and produced 890 fleeces. By 1900, when the farm was run by the McMeekin heirs, the PVA records list the livestock as including horses, cattle, and hogs, but no sheep. The sheep market regained strength with a brief upsurge in 1940 due to war time needs (U.S. Agricultural Census, 1860, 1940). Sheep provided income from wool and spring lambs and cleaned the fields of weeds for cleaner hay and seed production (Davis: 112).

In 1897, Fayette County farms were described in the state's Biennial Report as having large areas of farms devoted to the grazing of horses, trotters, and runners (12th Biennial Report : 44). H.A. Engman who owned the Bowman-Woolfolk-Crosby Farm (Property # 6) in 1900 had 5 thoroughbred mares, 6 common stock horses, 5 cows, 6 sheep, and 14 hogs (PVA records, 1900). Dr. D.A. Crosby, who owned the same farm from 1909 to 1935 was known primarily as a breeder and dealer in saddlehorses (Lexington Herald, December 24, 1935, p. 1).

By the 1920s, the number of horses per square mile in the Bluegrass area was higher than the rest of the state with 17.3 for horses compared to state averages of 9.5 horses per square mile. The excellent pasturage, high fertility of the soil, and mild climate of Fayette contributed to the success of horse farms during the 1930s and 1940s. Garrett Watts, owner of the Bowman-Brown-Watts Farm from 1909 until 1952 (properties #10-12) claimed that horses were a sideline to his main interest, general practical farming with tobacco as the major crop. Watts, however, owned an outstanding string of thoroughbred horses including one bay mare, Silverette, who was in the money 80 times in 131 starts and had two stakes victories. For endurance, Watts bred Jack Fairman who raced 215 times to the age of 11 and won 47 starts ("Genial Garrett Watts Passes 5 Days Before 99th Birthday". Lexington Herald, May 2, 1952, p.1).

The significant cultural elements that are associated with livestock farming are the pastures or the field patterns, often defined by fence rows composed of cherry,

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hackberry, and locust, which in Bowman Mill Rural Road Historic District have been preserved intact, despite both subdivisions and combinations of farms, over the 60-year period of significance. New property lines, even for purely residential use, in the Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District tend to follow the historic fence rows or South Elkhorn Creek.

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**Table 1: Land Use Fayette County Farms**

	1900 ***	1910	1920	1930	1935	1940
Total acres in farms	169,692 (1890)	165,541	160,342	166,722	163,234	166,302
Percentage of land area in farms		96.2%	93.1%	96.8%	94.8	96.5
Improved acres of farmland	159,330 (1890)	153,654	154,008	154,117	148,203	154,833
Percentage of improved land	93.9% (1890)	92.8%	96.0%	92%	90.8%	93%
<b>Improved Land Uses</b>						
Cropland harvested				48,712	40,982	43,642
Crop failure				152	843	909
Cropland idle or fallow				890	1762	4031
Plowable pasture				103,363	104,616	106,251
<b>Unimproved Land Uses</b>						
Woodland (unimproved)		4,939	2,733	3,354	4,469	1,682
All other unimproved		6,948	3,601	9,251	10,562	9,687

\*\*\* Figures for 1900 indicate that there were 178,894 acres in farms which is greater than the land area of 172,160 acres within the county so the figures for 1890 were used.

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**Table 2: Comparison of Fayette County Farm Size and Land Use with Kentucky Averages**

	1880	1890	1900	1910	1920	1930	1935	1940	1950
Number of Farms Fayette Co.	1071	1065	1245	1405	1978	1704	1707	1198	1,413
Average Size (acres) Fayette Co.	143	159	143.7	117.8	81.1	97.8	95.6	138.7	114.0
Average Size (acres) Kentucky	129	119	93.7	85.6	79.9	80.8	74.4	80.2	86
Percent improved land Fayette Co.	89.1	94.0		92.8	96.0	92.0	90.8	93.0	
Percent improved land Kentucky	49.93	55.2	62.5	64.7	64.7				

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**Table 3: Number and Percentage of Farms in Size Ranges for Fayette County for Census Years 1900-1940**

	1900	1910	1920	1935	1940
Under 10 ac. Percentage	131 10.5%	126 9%	471 23.8%	373 21.9%	219 18.3%
10-49 ac. Percentage	358 29%	554 39.4%	807 40.7%	624 36.5%	376 31.4%
50-99 ac. Percentage	200 16%	228 16.2%	242 12%	230 13.5%	169 14%
100-174 ac. Percentage	225 18%	193 13.7%	215 10.9%	225 13.2%	179 14.9%
175-259 ac. Percentage	143 11.5%	150 13.7%	108 5.8%	108 6.3%	100 8.4%
260-499 ac. Percentage	139 11%	118 8.4%	95 4.8%	102 6%	101 8.5%
500-999 ac. Percentage	40 3.3%	29 2%	28 1.4%	32 1.8%	36 3%
1000+ ac. Percentage	9 .7%	7 .5%	12 .6%	13 .8%	18 1.5%
Total number Fayette farms	1245	1405	1978	1707	1198
Average Size (Acres) Fayette	143.7	117.8	81.1	95.6	138.7

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**Table 4: Fayette County Agricultural Statistics from U.S. Census 1860-1900**

	1860	1870	1880	1890	1900
Horses	8,155	5,522	6,185	9,434	9013
Mules and Asses	4,289	2,354	1,378	1,730	10,735
Milch Cows	4,449	3,753	4,464	4,372	4,458
Total Cattle	16,768	12,072	15,961	14,138	11,221
Sheep	15,149	7,477	32,802		23,235
Swine	30,257	20,696	22,315	19,359	15,052
Wheat (bu.)	221,028	76,162	380,474	336,897	422,370
Rye (bu.)	25,125	42,028	18,00	8,780	4,860
Indian Corn (acres)		1,417	28,839	23,876	28,511
Indian Corn (bu.)	1,544,920		1,080,029	1019486	789,950
Oats (bu.)	208,060	173,276	68,896	115,158	40,340
Barley (bu.)	10,456	25,267	93,897	55,590	1,560
Hemp (acres)				6,394	
Hemp (tons)	1,564	2,370		2773	
Tobacco (acres)			2	2169	
Tobacco (lbs.)	2550	2160	702	2638272	6,339,690
Wool (lbs.)	75,551	28,421	174,177		66,114
Butter (lbs.)	293,737	157,742	231,082	283,808	
Milk (gals.)		96,200	161,550	1544680	347,620
Hay (tons)	2,639		4,591	19,674	2291328

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**Table 5: Fayette County Agricultural Statistics from U.S. Census 1900-1950**

	1910	1920	1930	1940	1950
Horses	8,638	5,829	6,385	5,661	
Mules and Asses	2,844	2,637	1,924	1,320	
Milch Cows	5,189	7,092	5,491	4,626	5,500
Beef Cattle		5,494	847	2,827	
Total Cattle	14,490	12,586	14,322	17,350	29,700
Sheep	25,547	12,127	23,943	34,520	26,900
Swine	18,434	19,271	8,841	9,101	15,100
Wheat (bu.)	302,097	330,391	99,069 (34)	59,895	38,000
Rye (bu.)	6,922	5,534	20,770 (34)	2,224	
Indian Corn (acres)	28,480	25,386	13,500	8,800	10,000
Indian Corn (bu.)	1,227,357	944,667	388896(34)	306539	600000
Oats (bu.)	30,894	20,913	8,193 (35)	625	
Barley (bu.)	17,065	19,111	24,804 (35)	48,898	
Hemp (acres)	1,490				
Hemp (tons)	698,475 (?)				
Tobacco (acres)	5,690	15,677			8,370
Tobacco (lbs.)	7,155,087	17,358,339			11885000
Wool (lbs.)		50,816	135919(34)	173309	159,000
Butter (lbs.)		236,953		21,843	
Milk (gals.)		1,559,087	2438535(34)	2366804	25,364
Hay (tons)	14,231	19,708			

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## Section 10: Geographical Data

Acreage of Property: 1,612

### UTM References

All coordinates in zone 16

#### Lexington West Quad

	Easting	Northing
<b>A:</b>	709 980	4211 240
<b>B:</b>	712 040	4211 520
<b>C:</b>	711 680	4208 360
<b>D:</b>	709 340	4208 680

#### Nicholasville Quad

	Easting	Northing
<b>E:</b>	711 080	4208 080

### Verbal Boundary Description

The verbal boundary descriptions of the properties included within the Bowman Mill Road Rural Historic District correspond to the maps of the properties on file in the Property Valuation Administrator's (PVA) Office in Fayette County. The properties and owners on the following pages are listed by district number as shown on the attached district map which shows the district boundaries, adjacent road names, streams, and individual property lines.

In the Fayette County PVA office, rural properties are shown on the Rural Service Area (RSA) maps by street address. Properties within the district are identified by addresses.

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### Boundary Justification

The northern boundary follows the south side of Parkers Mill Road from Little Georgetown to the intersection of Parkers Mill Road with Bowman Mill Road. From the intersection of Parkers Mill Road and Bowman Mill, the boundary proceeds south along the west right-of-way of Bowman Mill to the northern property line of 3414 Bowman Mill. The boundary turns to follow the north property lines of 3414 Bowman Mill and 2250 Old Cave Hill Lane. The northern boundary excludes Blue Grass Airport and its associated facilities, such as the runway, National Guard Armory, and police firing range on the north side of Parkers Mill Road. The area known as Little Georgetown was excluded because there are no contributing above ground standing structures. Little Georgetown was developed as an African American rural hamlet in the late nineteenth century. Parcels were sold to African Americans to provide a labor source for the surrounding farms. Since 1940, most of the dwellings have been torn down in Little Georgetown and the Bethany Church (Fa-296) burned circa 1990 and has been rebuilt. Little Georgetown Historic District was determined eligible by consensus for its archeological potential under criterion D in 1996. The northern boundary also excludes 2850 Parkers Mill Road and 3700 Bowman Mill Road. These properties were once associated with Beaumont Farm, but have been splintered by the construction of Man O War Boulevard and Paul Lawrence Dunbar High School.

The eastern boundary follows the east property lines of 2250 Cave Hill Lane, 2275 Bowman Mill Road, and 3333 Bowman Mill Road. The eastern boundary excludes Palomar Hills, a modern single-family residential subdivision.

The south boundary follows Military Pike to include the rear property lines of the farms which are oriented to Bowman Mill Road such as 3333 Bowman Mill Road, but excludes properties modern properties on the north side of Military Pike and properties along the south side of Military Pike which do not have the historic associations that the 20 properties within the boundary share.

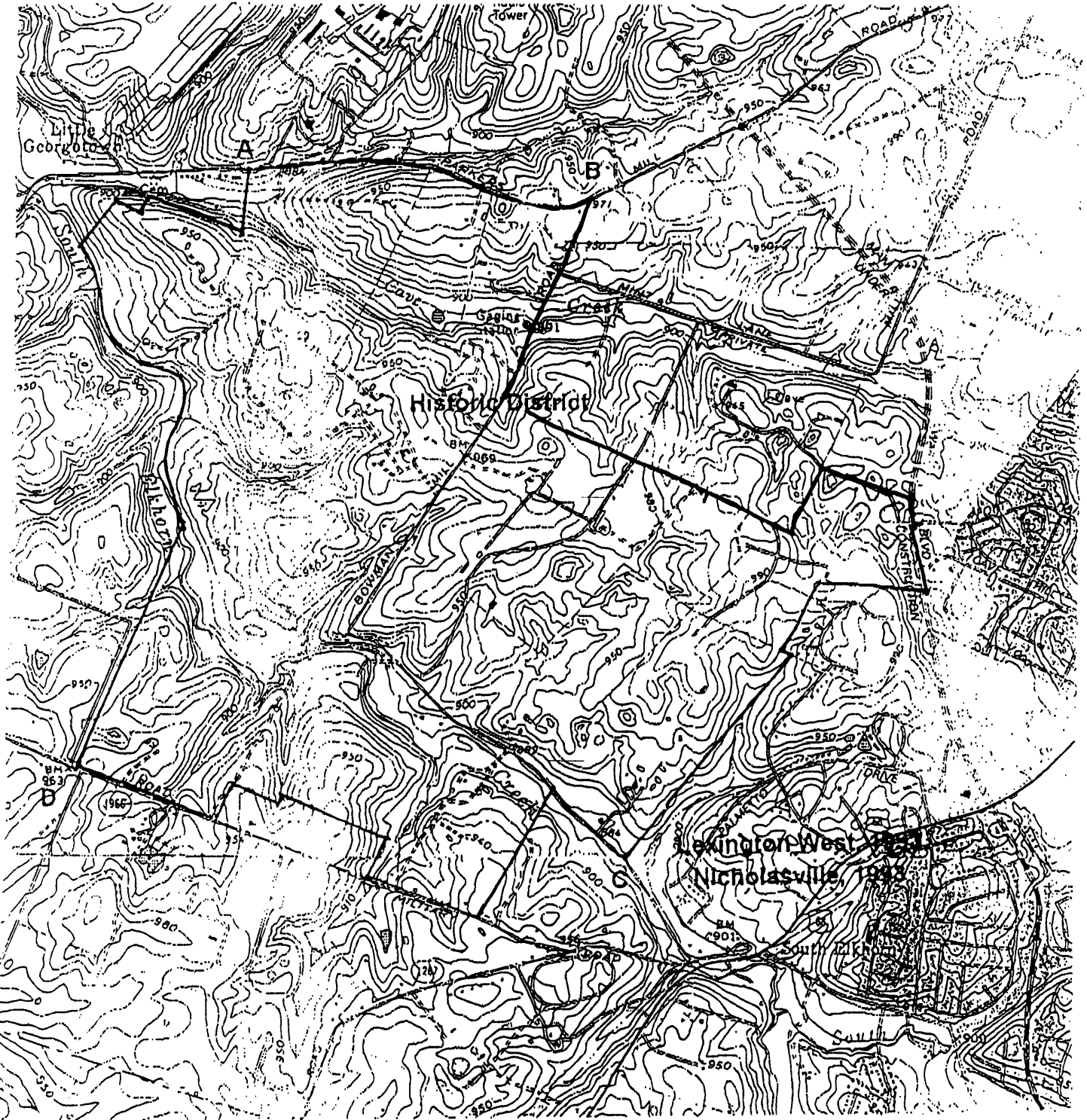
The west boundary follows the west property line of 3333 Bowman Mill Road and South Elkhorn Creek. It excludes the modern horse farms on the west side of the creek which have removed historic fence rows, torn down agricultural buildings from the period of significance, and do not meet National Register age criteria.

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**Property Owners**  
**Bowman Mill Rural Historic District**  
**Fayette County, Kentucky**

1. **3422 Bowman Mill**  
1.58 acres

Alice Headley Chandler  
3422 Bowman Mill Road  
Lexington, Ky. 40513

2. **3414 Bowman Mill**  
286.308 acres

Bank One, Lexington NA  
Trust w/ Headley  
201 E. Main St.  
Lexington, Ky. 40507

3. **2721 Bowman Mill**  
80.134 acres

Mill Ridge Farm Ltd.  
3414 Bowman Mill Rd.  
Lexington, Ky. 40513

4. **2250 Old Cave Hill Lane**  
86.957 acres

Mill Ridge Farm Ltd.  
3414 Bowman Mill Rd.  
Lexington, Ky. 40513



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5. **2575 Bowman Mill Rd.** Fa-304  
150.986 acres

Mary G. Murphy  
2575 Bowman Mill Rd.  
Lexington, Ky. 40513

6. **2730 Bowman Mill Rd.** Fa-305  
6.926 acres

Dan and Lizbeth L. Baker  
2730 Bowman Mill Rd.  
Lexington, Ky. 40513

7. **2782 Bowman Mill Rd.**  
3.830 acres

Clinton and Sarah B. Sherrod  
2782 Bowman Mill Rd.  
Lexington, Ky. 40513

8. **2792 Bowman Mill Rd.**  
14.170 acres

William G. Platz  
2792 Bowman Mill Rd.  
Lexington, Ky. 40513

9. **3000 Bowman Mill Rd.**  
.739 acre

Peter and Joan Flynn  
3000 Bowman Mill Rd.  
Lexington, Ky. 40513

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10. **3333 Bowman Mill Rd.** Fa-303 and Fa-267  
741.693 acres
- John A. Bell III Enterprises  
1718 Alexandria Drive  
Lexington, Ky. 40504
11. **3323 Bowman Mill Rd.** Fa-306  
11.392 acres
- John and Jessica Bell III  
3333 Bowman Mill Rd.  
Lexington, Ky. 40513
12. **3343 Bowman Mill Rd.**  
10 acres
- H. Bennett Bell  
1010 Greendale Road  
Lexington, Ky. 40511
13. **3555 Bowman Mill Rd.**  
22.15 acres
- Jeffrey C. Ruttenberg  
PO Box 1047  
Lexington, Ky. 40588
14. **3675 Bowman Mill Rd.**  
10 acres
- Christopher Speckert  
3675 Bowman Mill Rd.  
Lexington, Ky. 40513

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15. **3725 Bowman Mill Rd.** Fa-300  
32.223 acres

Michelle Primm  
3725 Bowman Mill Rd.  
Lexington, Ky. 40513

16. **3815 Bowman Mill Rd.**  
20 acres

James H. and Ruth A. Justice  
3815 Bowman Mill Rd.  
Lexington, Ky. 40513

17. **3899 Bowman Mill**  
1.39 acres

Gilbert and Pauline D. Nieto  
3899 Bowman Mill Rd.  
Lexington, Ky. 40513

18. **3800 Parkers Mill Rd.**  
46.34 acres

David and Pamela Stone  
2505 Mansion View Court  
Lexington, Ky. 405013

19. **4100 Parkers Mill Rd.**  
37.02 acres

Dag and Lajla Ryen  
4100 Parkers Mill Rd.  
Lexington, Ky. 40513

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20. **4300 Parkers Mill Rd.**  
48 acres

Edward S. Turlington  
PO Box 1027  
Dunn, North Carolina 28335