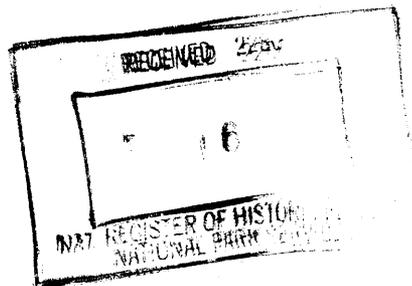


1105



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 any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Radcliffe Mill

other names K-287; Ratcliffe Mill, T. H. Topping Flour Mill, P. M. Brooks Flour Mill

2. Location

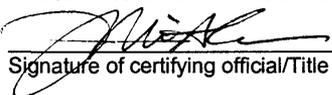
street & number 860 High Street not for publication

city or town Chestertown vicinity

state Maryland code MD county Kent code 029 zip code 21620

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

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


Signature of certifying official/Title

11-13-06
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

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

Signature of certifying official/Title

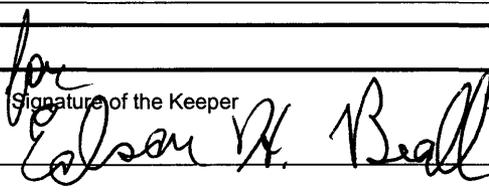
Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

- entered in the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet.
- determined eligible for the National Register.
 - See continuation sheet.
- Determined not eligible for the National Register.
- removed from the National Register.
- other (explain): _____


Signature of the Keeper

12-27-06
Date of Action

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	
3	0	buildings
0	0	sites
0	0	structures
0	0	objects
3	0	Total

Name of related multiple property listing

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

N/A

number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/processing

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural outbuilding

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/storage

Current Functions

(Enter categories from instructions)

RECREATION AND CULTURE/museum

AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/horticultural facility

COMMERCE/TRADE/warehouse

7. Description

Architectural Classification

(Enter categories from instructions)

NO STYLE

Materials

(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation brick, concrete

walls wood, metal, concrete, vinyl

roof metal, asphalt

other concrete, metal

Narrative Description

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

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

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

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

Criteria Considerations

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

Property is:

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

Narrative Statement of Significance

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

Area of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE
COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1891-1955

Significant Dates

1891 (construction of current mill)
1924 (construction of grain elevator)
1997 (mill operations ceased)

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

unknown

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

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

Previous documentation on files (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
previously listed in the National Register
previously determined eligible by the National Register
designated a National Historic Landmark
recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey
recorded by Historic American Engineering Record

Primary location of additional data:

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

Name of repository:

Maryland Historical Trust

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)
Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of Property 2.32 acres Chestertown, MD quad

UTM References

(Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

1	1 8	4 0 6 7 3 5	4 3 4 1 4 6 0	3			
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2				4			

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 Betty Bird, Julie Darsie
Organization Betty Bird & Associates LLC date July 2005
street & number 2607 24th Street, NW, Suite 3 telephone (202) 588-9033
city or town Washington state DC zip code 20008

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 Radcliffe Investment, LLC
street & number P.O. Box 74 telephone (410) 778-1099
city or town Chestertown state MD zip code 21620

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

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

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 7 Page 1

DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Radcliffe Mill stands on the north side of High Street (Route 20) northwest of Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland. Radcliffe Creek and the tracks of a Penn Central Railroad spur lie to the west; the site of the mill pond (now filled) lies to the east. Radcliffe Mill consists of a Mill Building (1891), Grain Elevator (probably constructed 1924), and Annex/Seed House. The Annex, formerly a stable, dates to ca. 1900. The Seed House addition dates to ca. 1970. The Seed House addition post-dates the period of significance for this resource. The Mill Building, the most complex building, has a rectangular footprint that consists of the Main Block, the Forebay and Forebay Addition to the south, the West Addition and Grain Bin to the west, and the North Addition and C.M.U. Addition to the north. With the exception of the C.M.U. Addition, all components of the Mill Building are wood frame construction. All of these buildings contribute to the significance of the resource. (See Attachment A: Site Diagram)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 7 Page 2

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

MILL BUILDING

Main Block: The Main Block (the 1891 mill prior to additions) measures 24 feet wide by 56 feet 8 inches deep. The south half is 4 stories with the upper 2 stories enclosed in a gambrel roof; the north half is 2 stories topped by a gable roof. The Main Block has a brick foundation, wood weatherboard, a corrugated metal gambrel roof, and an asphalt shingle gable roof. The east elevation of the Main Block has 5 window openings on the 1st floor and 4 on the 2nd. Two on the 1st floor are infilled with shiplap wood weatherboard; all others have 6/6 wood sash. Also on the east elevation is a loading bay with a sliding wood batten door on a metal track. The sliding door pulls aside to reveal recent French doors with a transom. The north and south elevations of the gambrel roof section have window openings with missing sash. On the west slope of the gambrel roof are two shed dormers infilled with plywood and corrugated metal. A recent corrugated metal canopy supported by wood posts extends across the southern half of the east elevation.

Forebay: A 1 ½-story, front-gable Forebay projects from the south elevation of the Main Block. The Forebay originally housed water-powered turbines. The Forebay has vinyl siding over wood weatherboard and a corrugated metal roof. A late 20th century storefront on the south elevation consists of two large plate glass windows flanking a half-glass door. The south gable and east elevation of the Forebay have paired 6/6 wood sash.

Forebay Addition: A 1-story addition projects from the west elevation of the Forebay (southwest of the Main Block). The Forebay Addition replaced an earlier engine room. The Forebay Addition has vinyl siding and a corrugated metal shed roof behind a square false front. The south and west elevations of the Forebay Addition each have two 6/6 wood sash.

West Addition: A 2-story addition projects from the west elevation of the Main Block. The west addition has wood weatherboard on the west elevation, standing-seam metal on the south elevation, and a corrugated metal shed roof with exposed rafter tails. There are two loading bays on the 1st story, one infilled with wood weatherboard and one infilled with metal panels and a 9-light, fixed-sash, wood window. There are three 6-light wood awning windows on the 2nd story. A corrugated metal canopy supported by steel trusses extends across the 1st story.

Grain Bin: A 3 ½ story Grain Bin also projects from the west elevation of the Main Block, north of the West Addition.¹ The Grain Bin has wood weatherboard and an asphalt shingle gable roof with a small, gabled cupola. At the 3rd story level, a conveyor stretches from a window opening in the Grain Bin to the freestanding Grain Elevator to the west.

North Addition: A 2-story L-shaped addition wraps the north elevation and northwest corner of the Main Block. The North Addition has corrugated metal siding and a corrugated metal shed roof. The North Addition has loading bays containing recent double doors on its east and west elevations. A track with sliding batten doors remains on the west elevation; a track with no doors remains on the east. Several 6-light wood awning windows also remain on each elevation.

¹ The Grain Bin may have been the "Grain Elevator" constructed in 1904. (*Kent News*, July 2, 1904)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 7 Page 3

C.M.U. Addition: A post-1980 1-story addition extends north from the North Addition. The addition is constructed of concrete masonry units (c.m.u.) and is separated from the rest of the building by a 2-story c.m.u. parapet wall. The shed roof is covered in standing-seam metal. There are loading bays on the east, north, and west elevations. The loading bay on the east has a sliding wood batten door. The loading bay on the north has recent double doors and vinyl 1/1 windows. North of the loading bay is a 4-light fixed-sash metal window. The loading bay on the west has a sliding wood batten door pulled aside to reveal 1/1 vinyl windows. A c.m.u. loading dock extends north from the c.m.u. addition. A c.m.u. and wood frame shed stands on the west side of the loading dock. The shed has vinyl 1/1 and 4-light fixed-sash metal windows.

INTERIOR

On the interior, earlier walls separating the Main Block, West Addition, and North Addition have been removed. A recent partition wall south of the Grain Bin divides the large, open space in two. The interior has an exposed wood post-and-beam structural system. A row of round steel columns has replaced posts in the east end of the space. At some point, the floor was dropped nearly to grade level, leaving the brick foundation exposed on the east wall. The current floor is unfinished board with plywood patches. Standing water prevented examination of the basement.

The perimeter walls of the Main Block are clad in horizontal and vertical board. Those of the West Addition are covered in drywall, and those of the North Addition are unfinished. The ceiling is open with exposed joists. The Grain Bin projects into the space. The Grain Bin has an exposed brick foundation up to the original floor level, wood weatherboard on its north and south sides, and horizontal board on its east side.

A large opening connects the Main Block and Forebay. The interior wall between the Forebay and Forebay Addition has been removed. The Forebay and Forebay Addition have a concrete floor, knotty pine paneled walls, and a recent dropped ceiling. A small office, also finished in knotty pine, has been partitioned in the west bay of the Forebay Addition.

On the second floor, the Main Block, West Addition, and North Addition are again combined into a single space. The post and beam structural system is exposed. The board floor has plywood patches. The perimeter walls are horizontal board on the Main Block and unfinished on the West and North Additions. The ceiling is open with exposed joists. Some wood weatherboard remains on the exterior north, south, and west walls of the Main Block where they intersect roof lines of additions. The Grain Bin has wood weatherboard on its north and south sides. Wood storage compartments covered in horizontal board conceal the east side of the Grain Bin. A separate wood storage compartment stands in the south end of the Main Block.

Wire mesh screens separate the Forebay attic from the second floor of the Main Block. The Forebay attic has a board floor, horizontal board knee walls, and an unfinished gable wall and ceiling.

Only the Main Block has a third floor. The third floor has a board floor and unfinished walls and ceiling. Much of the equipment that remains is at this level, particularly under the gable at the north end of the Main Block.

Only the south end of the Main Block (beneath the gambrel roof) has a fourth floor. The fourth floor has a board floor and unfinished walls and ceiling.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 7 Page 4

The interior of the C.M.U. Addition has exposed steel posts and beams, a concrete floor, painted c.m.u. walls, and a dropped ceiling.

ANNEX AND SEED HOUSE

A Seed House (ca. 1970) and Annex (ca. 1900) stand northeast of the Mill Building. The Annex, formerly used as a stable, measures approximately 16 feet by 52 feet. It is two stories tall with a pier foundation, wood shiplap siding, a corrugated metal gable roof, and a corrugated metal gabled cupola. The west elevation of the Annex has three sliding wood batten doors on the first story and two hinged wood batten doors at loft level. The south elevation has a sliding wood batten door on the first story and a 6/6 wood window in the gable. The north elevation has a hinged wood batten door and a 6-light fixed sash window on the first story and the remnant of a chute in the gable. The interior of the Annex is unfinished with a small, recent loft in its southwest corner.

A small connector covered in standing-seam metal leads from the Annex to the Seed House.

The Seed House measures approximately 48 feet by 40 feet. It is one story tall with a pier foundation, standing-seam metal siding, and a corrugated metal gable roof. The south and north elevations of the Seed House have sliding batten doors and 6-light, fixed-sash, wood windows. The interior is unfinished, open plan space. The board floor is made of 2 x 4s.

GRAIN ELEVATOR

A Grain Elevator, probably constructed in 1924, stands west of the Mill Building. The Grain Elevator is constructed of wood frame and clad in corrugated metal panels. It ranges from 35 to 50 feet tall.

ALTERATIONS

The physical history of Radcliffe Mill is addressed in Section 8: Resource History and Historic Context.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 8 Page 1

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The present Radcliffe Mill complex is significant under Criterion A for its association with the development of agriculture and the associated grist milling industry in Kent County, Maryland. The present complex dates to 1891 and occupies land along Radcliffe Creek that has been associated with milling for 300 years. A mill has operated in this approximate location from 1694 until 1997. Investors W. Eliason, C.T. Westcott, and T.W. Eliason, Jr. constructed the core of the present building as a roller mill in 1891. The Radcliffe Mill complex now consists of the Mill, Grain Elevator, and Annex/Seed House. Radcliffe Mill is significantly associated with wheat cultivation, one of the mainstays of the rural economy of Kent County. The history of the mill and the evolution of its form reveal the effects of shifts in agriculture, transportation, and markets, especially the impact of mechanization on both agriculture and mill operations. Changes to the mill building and mill complex illustrate the impact of transportation and mechanization on the production and distribution of agricultural products. Alterations to Radcliffe Mill and its site directly relate to the functional evolution of the mill and do not affect the integrity of the mill's historic associations. Situated on a National Scenic Byway, the mill is a prominent visual landmark marking the southern entrance to Chestertown, the county seat. Because of its long operation, Radcliffe Mill's period of significance extends to 1955. All of the buildings in the Radcliffe Mill complex contribute to the significance of the resource; the Seed House addition to the Annex postdates the period of significance of the property.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 8 Page 2

RESOURCE HISTORY AND HISTORIC CONTEXT

Radcliffe Mill is situated along Radcliffe Creek immediately outside Chestertown on a site that has been associated with a grist mill since the late 17th century. The present mill complex, which consists of the Mill, Grain Elevator, and Annex/Seed House, originated in 1891 when W. Eliason, C.T. Westcott, and T.W. Eliason, Jr. constructed the Main Block of the present Mill. Constructed as a roller mill, Radcliffe Mill was part of intensive late 19th century industrial development along the creek. Taking advantage of Radcliffe Creek's strategic location near Chestertown at the intersection of important roads, the Eliasons and Westcott established the Chestertown Straw Board Company on the west bank of the creek in 1882. By the end of the 19th century, an ice plant, creamery, and cannery also developed along the creek. After providing the infusion of capital required to replace the existing grist mill with a new, up-to-date roller mill, in 1898 the investors sold Radcliffe Mill to Thomas H. Topping and his father-in-law James Price, who operated several other mills in Kent County. In 1912, after Topping's death, his widow sold Radcliffe Mill to Philip Medford Brooks. The Brooks family operated the mill as Brooks Mill until 1997. (See Attachment C: Historic Images)

The site's long history of mill use enhances understanding of the mill's association with Kent County agriculture and the circumstances that allowed a grain mill to survive for three centuries on the site. While the location of the earlier mill is not presently known, the foundation of the Forebay of Radcliffe Mill might be associated with the earlier mill.² The mill and mill pond once occupied a much larger property encompassing land on both sides of Radcliffe Creek. Initially constructed by the Wilmer family in 1694, the grist mill remained in the Wilmer family through 1809. For much of the 19th century the property was known as Whaland's Mill, after the family that operated it from 1809-1880. Hiram and Mary Brown briefly held the property from 1880-1882. In 1882, the Chestertown Straw Board Company, a group comprised largely of members of the prosperous local Eliason and Westcott families, purchased the property to construct a \$98,000 plant to manufacture strawboard, a coarse yellow cardboard created from waste straw. In 1889, the American Strawboard Company acquired their operations, divesting themselves of the grist mill and its immediate surroundings that same year. The Eliasons and C.T. Westcott then purchased the mill site and constructed a new roller mill in 1891.

WHEAT CULTIVATION IN KENT COUNTY

Radcliffe Mill survives to represent Kent County's historic dependence on milling and grain. Grist mills and flour mills are inextricably linked with agricultural cultivation and wheat production, a significant and enduring component of the Kent County economy. Even as late as the 1970s, agriculture generated over \$53 million for the County, \$35 million of which was in crops.³ At that time, Kent County had 378 farms with 101,721 acres of crops.⁴

As with much of the Maryland tidewater, early settlers planted tobacco. Farmers in Kent County and other areas on the Upper Shore soon realized that soils were better suited to wheat than to tobacco. With its strong ties to Philadelphia Quaker merchants, Kent County soon boasted a number of mills along its streams. The county established a lively trade in both grain and timber exports in the 18th century, trade supported by Kent County's pivotal position along water routes

² The exterior of the foundation is presently covered and its interior is flooded, preventing inspection that might allow more precise dating.

³ "Guide to Kent County Heritage," p. 48.

⁴ Sutton, p. 22.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 8 Page 3

to mainland Philadelphia and Annapolis. However, by the early years of the 19th century the decline in British trade and inferior agricultural methods created an economic slump in the County.

Baltimore became increasingly important as an entrepot for the transshipment of goods. After the Chesapeake and Delaware Canal opened in 1829, providing Baltimore with water access to northern and southern ports, Kent County became a backwater port. The commercial importance of the County further diminished after the railroad supplanted ships as the most efficient means of moving passengers and freight. In the post-revolutionary period, Kent County's economic decline was so pervasive that architectural historian Michael Bourne noted "a virtual dearth" of buildings constructed during that time.⁵ Nevertheless, Kent County's proximity to Norfolk, Baltimore, and Philadelphia by water continued to serve the county's agricultural economy. As progressive farming methods made slow inroads within the county, steamer transportation made it possible to export produce and orchard crops, particularly peaches.

During the late 19th and early 20th century, peaches became an important crop in Kent County, with peaches shipped throughout the country. After a virus killed many of the peach trees in the early 1900s, farmers turned acreage devoted to orchards to wheat, a transformation that peaked during the 1920s.⁶ After 1920, wheat acreage dropped throughout the 20th century. In 1920, 43,966 acres were in production; in 1940, 24,139; in 1969, 8,548; and by 1979, 4,663.⁷ Easily grown, wheat was an attractive crop that a single farmer could harvest with a grain binder and threshing machine. In 1933, the acreage planted in wheat in Kent County was the fifth largest in Maryland. The county's 34,700 acres produced 674,000 bushels. During the Depression, over 92% of its wheat acreage was under federal wheat acreage reduction contract, a percentage reputedly the highest of any county east of the Mississippi.⁸

Corn did not begin to displace wheat until the mid-20th century. Until the invention of the tricycle cultivating tractor in 1935, corn required horse drawn cultivators and was cut, shocked, and husked by hand. This labor intensive crop was not widely grown until the invention of the corn picker in the 1950s. Even larger farms had only 50 to 60 acres planted in this crop. Since by 1931 both corn and wheat sold for the same price per bushel, there was little incentive for farmers to plant corn.⁹

RADCLIFFE CREEK AS MILL SITE

While the present Radcliffe Mill only dates to the late 19th century, the earlier history of mills on the property enriches understanding of the evolution of milling on the site. In particular, the earlier history illuminates the importance of grist mills and highlights how important capital and transportation access were to the later survival of milling on the property.¹⁰

The mill site on Radcliffe Creek is inextricably linked with the creation of Chestertown. During the 17th century, the now-vanished port of New Yarmouth (probably near the mouth of Church Creek) served the tobacco-based economy and functioned as county seat. As timber and grain slowly began to supplant tobacco as the mainstay of the economy in the

⁵ Bourne, p. 413.

⁶ Sutton, p. 82.

⁷ Sutton, p. 45. Figures taken from U.S. Census.

⁸ Sutton, p. 121.

⁹ Sutton, pp. 82-83.

¹⁰ The site of the 17th century mill remains unknown. John Sprinkle, an archeologist who is Philip Medford Brooks' grandson, stated that he and his parents often speculated about the location of the original mill but never determined the exact location.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 8 Page 4

late 17th and early 18th century, New Town or Chester Town surpassed New Yarmouth in importance, becoming the county seat for Kent County. The Wilmer family, who established the first mill on the site, carved Chestertown from a square mile of land known as "Stepney" along the Chester River north of Quaker Neck. Simon Wilmer II, the son of the first mill operator, laid out the town, effectively creating Chestertown.¹¹ The Radcliffe Creek property remained in the hands of the Wilmer family until John Whaland purchased the mill in 1809.¹²

The mill on Radcliffe Creek occupied a site approximately one mile from the center of Chestertown. The Radcliffe Mill property is situated near the intersection of two early roads leading from Chestertown to Rock Hall through Fairlee and Lankford and the road north from Chestertown to Smithville. The 1860 Martinet Map of the Fourth District denotes the intersection as "Harrisburg," a name that continues through the 1877 Lake, Griffing and Stevenson Map and subsequently disappears.

Through the first two centuries of its existence, the mill changed hands only once. The length of time the mill typically remained within the ownership of a single family suggests the value of the Radcliffe Creek property. While other enterprises often developed along sites with sufficient head, the Radcliffe Creek grist mill seems to have been sufficiently profitable to discourage other use of the creek and its mill pond until the late 19th century. Moreover, the right to cut and store ice from the mill pond only enhanced the value of the property, supplementing seasonal mill use that depended on the head of water descending from the pond.

WILMER'S MILL (1694-1809)

Wills and deed records suggest that a mill was operating on Radcliffe Creek as early as the late seventeenth century. In 1669, the Maryland Assembly passed an act encouraging the establishment of water mills. In 1694, John Biddle constructed a water mill for Simon Wilmer on Radcliffe Creek.¹³ Simon Wilmer, who died in 1699, appears to have been the first miller. His slave, "Negro James," operated the mill. At her death in 1722, Simon Wilmer's widow, Rebecca Tilghman, provided that James and certain other slaves were to be freed after operating the mill for two years for the benefit of the heirs to which she bequeathed the mill.¹⁴ When her son Simon Wilmer II died in 1737, his will left "part of my lands on which the grist and saw mills stand with mills and Miller's House" to his sons. The 1783 Direct Tax Assessment noted "two brick dwelling Houses and Kitchens (sic), one Grist Mill, seven out Houses, two orchards joining Chestertown" on the Wilmer lands."¹⁵ Given the overall economic decline in Chestertown after the American Revolution, it is unlikely that many changes were made to the 17th century mill prior to the 1850s when Kent County once again began to prosper.

¹¹ "Guide to Kent County Heritage," pp. 8-9, 22.

¹² The Wilmer family, along with the Boyer family, was associated with the Dreka Mill along the Sassafras River until 1853. (Bourne, p. 502.)

¹³ Bourne, p. 26.

¹⁴ "Guide to Kent County Heritage," p. 46.

¹⁵ Bourne, pp. 103-104.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 8 Page 5

WHALAND'S MILL (1809-1880)

Throughout the 19th century, deed records referred to the five acre property containing the mill and miller's house as "Whaland's Mill" or "Ratcliffe Mills." An 1850 newspaper notice stated that Ratcliffe Mill ground both wheat and corn.¹⁶ By 1854, the mill had "undergone a thorough repair" and had been refurbished with machinery from Philadelphia. Thomas H. Whaland and John W. Whaland noted the mill boasted "a good miller, industrious and attentive to business, polite and accommodating to customers."

The 1860 Martinet Map of the Fourth District depicts the mill nestled between the road to Chestertown and the mill pond. "Dr. T. Whaland (res)" lies across the road; a second structure just northeast of the mill is labeled "Dr. T. Whaland" as is another Kent County structure unconnected with the Radcliffe Creek property. Thomas H. Whaland (b. 1818) was a physician who had six children and owned two slaves. He inherited the mill from his father John Whaland. Dr. Thomas Whaland granted the mill property to his daughter Henrietta Whaland in 1865, the year she married Charles Wickes. The 1878 Kent County Directory listed Thomas H. Whaland as the only miller in Chestertown; the 1880 census lists Dr. Whaland's son, John W. Whaland (b. 1834) as a miller.¹⁷

Despite the Whaland family's long ownership, the mill appears to have been mortgaged at the time Thomas H. Whaland's estate was settled in 1880. The mill became the property of Henrietta Whaland Wickes (b. 1834) and her husband Charles. Charles Wickes was attorney who likely had little interest in running the mill. The couple promptly sold the mill property to Hiram and Mary Elizabeth Brown that same year for \$1500.¹⁸

HIRAM & MARY ELIZABETH BROWN (1880-1882)

The Browns' tenure on the property was short-lived. The Browns appear to have been sufficiently prosperous to own River House in the late 19th century. They constructed a new house on the Radcliffe Creek property prior to selling the site to the Chestertown Straw Board Company in 1882. While the Browns acquired the mill property through a deed of trust, the Chestertown Straw Board Company purchased it for \$10,000 in cash.¹⁹ Brown reserved the right to access the pond, harvest ice, and to move the new house he had built or to use the new house as an ice house.

RADCLIFFE MILL AND LATE 19TH CENTURY INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT ALONG RADCLIFFE CREEK

In 1872, the Smyrna & Delaware Bay Railroad reached Chestertown, providing Kent County with an alternative to shipping goods by water across the Chesapeake Bay. The coming of the railroad transformed the distribution of agricultural products, opening up new markets and offering new business opportunities for Chestertown entrepreneurs. Because water transportation directed settlement in Kent County and continued as a major mode of transportation and

¹⁶ *Kent News*, August 10, 1850

¹⁷ The 1880 census shows Dr. Whaland and several children, including John W. and Henrietta and her husband, all living in same household.

¹⁸ It is interesting to note that one of Simon and Rebecca Wilmer's daughter became a Wickes. ("Guide to Kent County Heritage," p. 46)

¹⁹ The cost figure in the deed may be read as "two" or "ten" thousand dollars. Given the commercial importance of the site and the newly constructed house, \$10,000 is the probable number.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 8 Page 6

shipment through the early 20th century, the County had only a few roads that connected settlements and towns. Even as late as the early 20th century, citizens considered the lack of roads and the poor quality of the roads that existed as the main obstacle to the economic growth of the County.

With the coming of the railroad, the scale of industrial activity along Radcliffe Creek immediately increased. The Radcliffe Creek site not only possessed the mill pond and sufficient head to operate turbines, it also occupied the intersection of important county roads. Its close proximity to Chestertown and location along the road to Rock Hall, the closest Eastern Shore port to Baltimore, offered a distinct advantage for delivery of agricultural raw materials and product distribution. By the early 1880s, a rail spur running from the main line of the Smyrna & Delaware Bay Railroad served the site, amplifying the commercial leverage its access to roads already provided.

Investors quickly took advantage of these opportunities, using their access to capital to develop mechanized industrial enterprises. The investors in the Chestertown Straw Board Company constructed one of the largest plants in Chestertown on the west side of Radcliffe Creek. An ice-making plant, a creamery, and a cannery quickly followed the strawboard plant.²⁰ After selling their interest in the Chestertown Straw Board Company to the American Strawboard Company, three of the original investors constructed Radcliffe Mill, a roller mill incorporating modern technology for grinding wheat into refined flour.

THE CHESTERTOWN STRAW BOARD COMPANY, THE ELIASON/WESTCOTT SYNDICATE, AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF RADCLIFFE MILL (1882-1889; 1889-1898)

The creation of the Chestertown Straw Board Company illuminates how capital accumulation provided local investors with incentives to invest in industrial operations. Compared with the scale of establishing the Straw Board plant, constructing a new mill with the latest roller mill technology was a small undertaking. The Chestertown Straw Board Company was formed by George B. Westcott, Charles T. Westcott, J.K. Aldridge, T.W. Eliason, Wilbur Eliason, and T.W. Eliason, Jr. to produce strawboard, a coarse yellow cardboard made from straw pulp. After purchasing the site, the company immediately spent \$98,000 to construct a manufacturing plant. Reputedly the largest factory in Chestertown, the Chestertown Straw Board Company was situated on the west bank of Radcliffe Creek, across the creek from the present mill. (See Attachment C, Page 1 of 4: Bird's Eye View of Chestertown, Kent Co., Maryland 1907). The construction of the strawboard mill signaled a new phase in industrial utilization of Radcliffe Creek. In addition to the present Radcliffe Mill, this development eventually included an ice factory, paper basket factory (later a cannery), and the strawboard mill.

The Chestertown Straw Board Company had the access to capital required to invest in new facilities and machinery. The company comprised of the Westcotts and the Eliasons united two of the most powerful mercantile families in mid-19th century Chestertown. Thomas Wilson Eliason (d. 1893) initially settled in Centreville when he moved from Smyrna, Delaware to Kent County. By 1842, he opened a general store in the Masonic Building. He took out extensive advertisements in the *Kent News* and ran ads larger than any other merchant. These advertisements indicate that he sold

²⁰ The fortunes of enterprises along the creek were subject to vagaries caused by a series of fires in the 1890s. In 1890, the Chestertown Ice Plant, with a capacity of ten tons of ice per day, was constructed at a cost of \$10,000. In 1895, a fire destroyed the ice plant and a creamery. Robert G. Nicholson rebuilt the ice plant in 1896. (Usilton, p. 64)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 8 Page 7

general merchandise, clothing, fabric, stationary, and plaster lath, and lumber. By 1854, he purchased the building that is now the White Swan Tavern, across the street from his store's original location, and commenced a major remodeling of the building. With the profits generated from his business enterprises, Eliason purchased farms throughout the County. After Thomas W. Eliason's death in 1893, his son Thomas Walker Eliason shifted the business to a more agricultural orientation. Thomas Walker Eliason concentrated on lumber and fertilizer as well as managing the farms his father had purchased with the profits of his successful business. Wilbur Eliason, a farmer, was T. W. Eliason, Jr.'s son.²¹

George Burgin Westcott served as president of the First National Bank and Secretary of the Chestertown Mutual Fire Insurance Company. Like Thomas Wilson Eliason, Westcott had generated enough profit from his enterprises to purchase eleven farms totaling 2700 acres, 12 lots in Chestertown, and four in Baltimore. His son, Charles Tilden Westcott, became an attorney.²²

Despite its strong financial backing, the Chestertown Straw Board Company operated for only one year, suspending operations in May 1883. Wilbur Eliason then leased the strawboard mill, which remained idle until 1886.²³ An additional \$85,000 was expended on the facility, which produced 13 tons of strawboard per day and employed over 60 people. In 1889, the American Strawboard Company, a Midwest concern, acquired the Chestertown Straw Board Company.²⁴ The American Strawboard Company immediately decided to divest themselves of the grist mill.

In July 1889, the Chestertown Straw Board & Mfg. Co. sold the grist mill to a group comprised of Thomas W. Eliason, Thomas W. Eliason, Jr., Wilbur Eliason, and Charles T. Westcott. The group founded Radcliffe Roller Mills.²⁵ The description of the mill and rights pertaining to its operation, which generally repeats language in previous deeds, provides a description of the site at the time they acquired it:

... together with the buildings and improvements thereon and the rights, roads, water privileges, waste ways, and all appurtenances thereto belonging: Also the right to use the waters of the adjoining Mill Pond, subject only to the proper use of said water by the Mill of the American Strawboard Company, and also the right to use earth and repair the fore bay and waste race, and dig and haul earth therefore from the usual repair bank on the "Geddes" lot as said American Straw Board Company or its agent may designate, also the privilege of getting ice and selling ice from the said mill pond and the right to haul over the adjacent lands, to the public road . . .

Despite a major fire that required reconstruction of the mill in 1892, the strawboard factory remained in operation until 1979.²⁶

²¹ Bourne, pp. 110-111, 407.

²² Bourne, p. 319.

²³ The 1887 State Directory lists Wilbur Eliason as the owner of the strawboard mill. (John McGrain, "The Molinography of Kent County," n.p.)

²⁴ Usilton, p. 364. In 1892, the strawboard mill burned and was promptly rebuilt in 1893.

²⁵ Charles T. Westcott's name appears throughout the chain of title. He was the trustee for the 1880 transaction releasing William H. Bian's mortgage. A posting at Genealogy.com indicates that a Mrs. Wickes Westcott donated the Whaland family Bible to Washington College.

²⁶ Usilton, p. 55 and 364.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 8 Page 8

The present Radcliffe Mill provides a superb example of how changes in mill technology intersected with this improved distribution system. For centuries millers ground wheat between two millstones, a process that resulted in considerable discarded material (“middlings”) and coarsely ground wheat. By the 1870s, inventors in Europe developed a practical, vertical system that utilized a combination of iron rollers and mesh screens to produce refined flour with little waste. This system allowed a miller to produce more barrels of flour from a bushel of wheat. In a situation that John McGrain aptly compared to the rush to purchase the latest computer technology regardless of its appropriateness, millers throughout the country scrambled to buy new equipment. In many instances, smaller operations did not maintain enough business to pay for the cost of the machinery, ruining many long-established millers. Roller mills offered more advantage in Midwest and Western states since harder red wheat grown in these regions needed several grindings, more refinement than the soft winter wheat grown on the East Coast required. Nevertheless, by the late 1880s, millers in Kent County and Queen Anne’s County jumped on the roller mill bandwagon.²⁷

By October 1890, the Eliason interests had plans to demolish the old mill and replace it with a new one incorporating the latest roller mill technology:

We are informed that the old grist mill at the edge of our town limits is to be torn down and a new mill built on the same site. The plans and specifications have arrived and it is expected to undertake the work at an early day [sic]. It will be a patent process roller mill and one equal to any in the State. Mr. Wilbur Eliason giving the work in hand, is enough in itself to assure it of success. This mill it is understood does not belong to the strawboard lessees. Mr. W. Wright is now running the mill.²⁸

TOPPING’S MILL (1898-1912)

In August of 1898, Charles T. Westcott sold the Radcliffe Mill to Thomas H. Topping and James P. Price for \$3,000. In contrast to previous deeds, this deed specifically conveyed “machinery therein” in addition to the improvements, water rights, and rights of access. Price and Topping operated several mills in Kent County including mills at St. Paul’s Church and on Buck Neck.²⁹ In 1901 James P. Price and his wife assigned their interest in the mill to Thomas Topping and his wife, the former Eva Price.³⁰ The Toppings clearly prospered.

In 1908, they constructed an impressive new house (now gone) between the mill and the former mill house. Topping devised the plans to the house, which was constructed by the Culp brothers. Much to everyone’s surprise Topping filled the small pond leading to the mill wheel for the house site.³¹ Topping incorporated a variety of innovative measures in the house including a vapor heating system and acetylene gas lighting.

²⁷ John W. McGrain, “Good Bye Old Burr’: The Roller Mill Revolution in Maryland, 1882,” in *Maryland Historical Magazine* (Vol. 77, No. 2, Summer 1982), p. 158, pp. 161-162. McGrain’s article provides a superb account of how roller mills transformed milling in the late 19th century.

²⁸ *Kent News*, October 25, 1890.

²⁹ *Transcript*, August 24, 1899 as quoted in John McGrain’s “Molinography of Kent County,” n.p.

³⁰ Topping taught at a private school in Chestertown. Some newspaper articles refer to him as “Prof. Topping.” (Usilton, p. 106; *Kent News*, April 22, 1905).

³¹ *Kent News*, June 13, 1908. The house associated with the 18th century mill was demolished during the 1970s. Henry Francis du Pont bought the interior and transported it to his summer house on Long Island in 1927. (Bourne, 104)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 8 Page 9

The water supply is another ingenious arrangement. A well about eight feet deep was dug at the kitchen door and by a system of pipes and storage tank the machinery in the flour mill is made to supply the force for pumping the water through the entire house. Not only is the supply of water from the well pure and good for all purposes but the force with which it is sent through the house is such as to make the system as effective as the system in any home in Chestertown. A pipe is also connected with the mill pond so that for fire or washing or any other purposes extra water may be obtained. The Professor is now working on a plan to clean the house by means of his vacuum pump. He has not tackled the cooking problem *yet*.³²

Because of the 300% increase in value for the mill property between the time Topping and Price purchased the mill in 1898 and Topping's widow sold it in 1912, it is likely that Topping made extensive improvements. In July 1904, Topping retained W.S. Culp and A.M. Culp to construct a grain elevator to store wheat and corn.³³ Because the Culpes were skilled carpenters, it is likely that the present grain bins are the "grain elevator" mentioned in the newspaper article.

The physical character of the mill during the Topping period is particularly well-documented. The 1907 T.M. Fowler drawing depicts the industrial activity at the intersection of Radcliffe Creek and High Street. (See Attachment C, Page 1 of 4: Bird's eye view of Chestertown, Kent Co., Maryland 1907) The sprawling American Strawboard Company manufactory extends west of the creek along the road. The mill depicted in the drawing has the distinctive Forebay, Grain Bin, and dormered roof still seen today. Two houses are shown on the property, including the Toppings' impressive new house (now gone) constructed along the road between the mill and the old miller's house.

The 1908 Sanborn Fire Insurance Map, the earliest Sanborn Map to depict the property, suggests the changes the Toppings made to the site. A 1-1/2 story frame flour warehouse was constructed next to the railroad spur. The map illustrates a dammed mill pond northeast of the Mill, extending close to the rear of the old miller's house and the Topping's new house. A flume extends from the mill pond to the Forebay of the 2-1/2 story Mill. The location of this mill pond differs from the location of the earlier, larger mill pond, situated northwest of the mill behind the American Strawboard Company (See Attachment C, Page 1 of 4: Bird's eye view of Chestertown, Kent Co., Maryland 1907). A two-story stable or barn associated with the Mill is situated immediately west of the flume near the southern end of the smaller mill pond.

The map notes that the rectangular frame Mill was a water mill, with steam being used in "winter only," when the pond was likely iced over. The Mill, which had a basement, was not electrified. A one-story engine room/boiler room housing a 20 h.p. engine and a boiler (both "not used") projected west from the Mill immediately beyond the Forebay. A three-story "flour elevator" was situated near the north end of the west façade. A passage extended under the elevator. The Mill functioned in the following way:

- Two water turbines in the Forebay
- Engines in the location of the current West Addition
- Flour packing in the basement
- Five stands of rollers, one corn cracker, and one attrition mill on the 1st floor
- Four reels on the 2nd floor
- Two reels and one isolator on the 2nd floor

³² *Kent News*, Dec. 26, 1905.

³³ *Kent News*, July 2, 1904.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 8 Page 10

By 1912, however, Thomas Topping had died, and Eva Topping sold the Mill to Philip Medford Brooks in June of that year.³⁴

BROOKS MILL (1912-1997)

Philip Medford Brooks purchased this well-established business for approximately \$14,000 from Mrs. Topping. The *Kent News* noted that, "this is one of the finest mill properties in the county and has a large patronage" and that Griffith Clift and John Nickerson, both expert millers, planned to stay on at the mill.³⁵

The mill remained in the Brooks family, which had deep roots in Kent County, until 1997. The deed gave P.M. Brooks, the right to "enlarge, add to or reconstruct the present mill building in accordance with his best judgment and discretion." Nevertheless, Widow Topping retained her house, resulting in a complicated accommodation on both sides. (See Attachment E: Sketch from 1912 Deed) In the deed, Brooks agreed that "no building of any kind shall be erected between the dwelling house now occupied by the said Eva Topping and the Mill Building as it is now constructed unless the parties hereto may hereafter agree in writing that same shall be erected." Topping's dwelling house had two sewers, one emptying into the tail race and the other emptying into the meadow behind the mill building. She reserved the right to enter onto the mill property to repair or reconstruct the sewers. Eva Topping also controlled the mill flume, "a covered water way leading across the Dwelling House Lot." The deed gave Brooks access to Topping's property to "repair, reconstruct, rebuild or clean out the said flume or water way" and provided that neither party would obstruct the flume or construct any building within 4-1/2 ft. of its center. The language of the deed suggests that the mill was still relying on water power in 1912, information consistent with the notes on the 1908 Sanborn Maps. Thus, P.M. Brooks likely converted the mill from water to diesel and later, electrical power.

By July 1912, Radcliffe Mills advertised that it was producing Rosebud Flour and was grinding corn meal daily.³⁶ The mill could produce flour in quantities ranging from 10 lbs. to 100 barrels and made a specialty of bran, chop, cracked corn, and meal.³⁷ In the fall of 1912, Brooks supplemented local crops by importing 1900 bushels of corn and 300 bushels of oats from Indiana as well as a ton of buckwheat from Pennsylvania.³⁸

Brooks made immediate improvements to the mill. By July 1913, "milling experts" overhauled all the flour machinery to improve the grade of flour Radcliffe Mills produced. The *Kent News* noted that "farmers can save a dollar or more per barrel on flour for their own consumption by having their wheat ground at Radcliffe Mills instead of selling their wheat and buying flour from dealers."³⁹

³⁴ *Kent News*, June 15, 1912. An sales advertisement placed by Mrs. Thomas H. Topping was published in the *Kent County News*, on May 18, 1912.

³⁵ *Kent News*, June 15, 1912.

³⁶ *Kent News*, July 12, 1912.

³⁷ *Kent News*, July 20, 1912.

³⁸ *Kent News*, October 5, 1912 and Dec. 7, 1912.

³⁹ *Kent News*, July 5, 1913.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 8 Page 11

The 1915 Sanborn Map depicts the property after Brooks acquired it. The 1915 map offers more detail than the 1908 map, showing a wide tail race emerging from the Forebay and noting that “gravity” sends water through the flume. The 1915 Sanborn Map states that the Forebay was 2-1/2 stories. (The number of stories is illegible in the earlier map.) A 32 h.p. gasoline engine was housed in the one-story engine room with a gasoline tank buried west of the engine room next to the tail race.⁴⁰ A wheat elevator holding 1500 bushels appeared within the mill at its north end. The map noted that the Grain Elevator held 4400 bushels. A number of outbuildings were scattered about the property including a crib (north of the mill), a one-story warehouse, a pig house, and a garage constructed over the race near the stable. The map indicates the extent to which the mill operation became increasingly mechanized after 1908. By 1915, the basement housed a flour packer and scourer, and the 1st floor boasted an additional stand of rollers. Machinery on the 2nd floor was reduced to one flour reel but the third floor housed two reels, one isolator and 16 stand of elevators.

By 1923, Brooks had fully converted the Mill to mechanical power. (A 1912 article in the *Kent News* noted that “the Radcliffe mill has been annoyed by eels getting in the machinery.”⁴¹) The 1923 Sanborn Map shows that the Mill featured electric lights and was powered by a gasoline engine. In contrast to previous maps, the flume, turbines, and mill pond are not shown, a telling omission of water sources in a map used for underwriting fire insurance, providing strong evidence that the Mill no longer relied on water power. The west side of the Mill, formerly occupied by functional elements projecting from the rectangular core of the Mill and its Forebay, was rationalized so that the Mill displayed a rectangular footprint with a notch in the northwest corner. The earlier engine room was gone, replaced by a one-story clay tile addition to the Forebay that expanded the width of the earlier engine room. The area between the Grain Bin and the engine room was infilled by a one-story frame office. The three-story Grain Bin now housed an additional 100 bushels, a capacity perhaps created by the closing of the passage underneath the elevator. The building was now considered a three-story building and was 35 ft. high.

The Grain Elevator northwest of the mill was likely constructed in 1924. An article about “large grain elevators” in the August 2, 1924 edition of the *Kent News* probably refers to this building.⁴² Comparison of the 1923 and 1960 Sanborn Maps suggests that the gambrel roof on the Mill was also likely constructed soon after 1923. The 1960 map depicts two different heights (50 ft. and 43 ft.) for the main block of the Mill, which the map characterizes as four stories high. Conveyors connect the Grain Elevator and upper floor of the Mill, indicating that they were part of the same building campaign.

In the 37 years between the publication of the 1923 Sanborn Map and the 1960 Sanborn Map paste-up, P.M. Brooks made additional adaptations to the Mill. The office was moved into the Forebay and the southwest corner of the Mill, the area that formerly housed the engine room and office, was reworked. The Forebay was extended to the west with a one-story frame structure. A two-story frame structure now infilled the entire area between the extended Forebay and the Grain Bin, which now had a capacity of 8000 bushels. Brooks expanded the Mill to the north with the two-story ell-shaped metal-clad North Addition; the open shed that had housed the scales was extended back to the new rear wall. The Mill was sprinklered by 1960. The storage capacity of the Mill was greatly expanded with new warehouses, corn cribs, and

⁴⁰ The configuration of features is slightly different on the 1915 map, suggesting more accurate measurement rather than replacement.

⁴¹ *Kent News*, Nov. 23, 1912.

⁴² This citation appears in an index of newspaper articles on the Radcliffe Mill site marked “Property of Everett S. Lambden.” Unfortunately, no microfilm copies of the *Kent News* for 1924 exist in public repositories. This four-page index of newspaper articles marked “Brooks” has proved accurate for years that are available on microfilm.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 8 Page 12

warehouses behind the Grain Elevator. The 1960 map also notes that the Annex, formerly depicted as a stable or barn, was used as a warehouse.

In its incarnation as Brooks Mill, Radcliffe Mill played a significant role for Kent County's farm families. Former county extension agent Stanley B. Sutton's account of early 20th century life in Kent County illustrates the importance of the mill. Sutton, who grew up three miles from Chestertown, recalled,

A trip to town a couple of weeks before Christmas was always a treat. Other trips to town were incidental when we might occasionally ride in the back of a wagon or Dearborn when some one hauled a load of grain to the mill or went after a barrel of flour. Brooks Mill was not really in town, but this trip was an exciting experience.⁴³

It took a lot of food for a family of this size [8] plus food for the hired help. We averaged a barrel of flour each month. We took our own wheat to the mill and brought home the flour plus bran and middlings which made calf or pig feed. A barrel of flour weighed 196 pounds. It took 6-1/2 bushels of wheat to make one barrel of flour.⁴⁴

The mill came to play a larger role for the Sutton family. Sutton's brother Martin (b. 1907) went to work with the Brooks Mill "cleaning and treating seed wheat for farmers. They had a seed cleaning and treating machine mounted on a trailer and pulled it behind a truck."⁴⁵

The survival of Radcliffe Mill and its transformation into a seed and grain emporium under the Brooks family is especially noteworthy. Radcliffe Mill represents a continuity of grain milling that transcended changes in modes of transportation, power sources, and even crops. The numerous water-powered grist mills that were an essential component of the agricultural base of Kent County in the 18th and 19th century eventually disappeared. There were reputed to be five or six mills near Millington (known as Head of Chester), including Andover Mill. A variety of circumstances, including the changing technology that rendered them obsolete, doomed many of these water-powered mills. Flooding that breached mill pond dams could also overwhelm marginal operations which could not afford repairs. Through a variety of circumstances including a fortunate location and an influx of capital, Radcliffe Mill survived into the late 20th century to continue the tradition of milling along Radcliffe Creek.

⁴³ Sutton, p. 47, 82.

⁴⁴ Sutton, p. 48.

⁴⁵ Sutton, p. 50.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 9 Page 1

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Bourne, Michael Owen. *Historic Houses of Kent County, An Architectural History: 1642-1860*. Chestertown, Maryland: The Historical Society of Kent County, 1998.
- Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland [map]. 1908. *Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970*. ProQuest Information and Learning Company.
- Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland [map]. 1915. *Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970*. ProQuest Information and Learning Company.
- Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland [map]. 1923. *Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970*. ProQuest Information and Learning Company.
- Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland [map]. 1960. *Digital Sanborn Maps, 1867-1970*. ProQuest Information and Learning Company.
- Fowler, T. M. *Bird's Eye View of Chestertown, Kent Co., Maryland 1907*. Morrisville, PA: Fowler & Kelley, 1907.
- Guide to Kent County Heritage. Chestertown, Maryland: Kent County Heritage Committee, 2003.
- Kent County Land Records.
- Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson. *An Illustrated Atlas of Kent and Queen Anne Counties, Maryland*. Philadelphia: Lake, Griffing, and Stevenson, 1877.
- Lambden, Everett S. Handwritten index to Brooks Mill articles in *Kent News*. Unpublished.
- Martenet, S. J. *Martenet's Map of Kent County, Maryland*. Baltimore: Martenet, 1860.
- The Maryland Directory. Baltimore: J. Frank Lewis & Co., 1878.
- McGrain, John. The Molinography of Kent County. 1967. On file at Maryland Historical Trust.
- Sutton, Stanley B. *Beyond the Roadgate: Kent County 1900-1980*. Chestertown, Maryland: Kent Printing Corporation, 1983.
- Usilton, Fred G. *History of Kent County, Maryland, 1630-1916*. Additional 54 chapters written by William B. Usilton. Chestertown, Maryland: Perry Publications, 1980.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 9 Page 2

MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES (cont.)

Kent News (Chestertown)

August 10, 1850 (Advertisement)
August 5, 1854 (Advertisement)
October 25, 1890 (A New Mill)
July 2, 1904 (Local Notes)
April 22, 1905 (Mill Dam Breaks!)
June 13, 1908 (New Buildings)
December 26, 1908 (Prof. Topping's Fine Home)
May 18, 1912 (For Sale)
June 15, 1912 (Local Notes)
July 20, 1912 (Advertisement and Local Notes)
October 5, 1912 (Local Notes)
November 23, 1912 (Local Notes)
December 7, 1912 (Local Notes)
July 5, 1913 (Local Notes)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

Name of Property

Kent County, Maryland

County and State

Section 10 Page 1

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The National Register Boundary for Radcliffe Mill corresponds to the boundary for Kent County Tax Map 204, Parcel 252. The parcel encompasses 2.32 acres and is bounded on the west, north and east by adjacent parcels, and on the south by High Street (Maryland Route 20). The abandoned bed of the Smyrna and Delaware Bay Railroad traverses the southwest corner of the parcel and is under separate ownership.

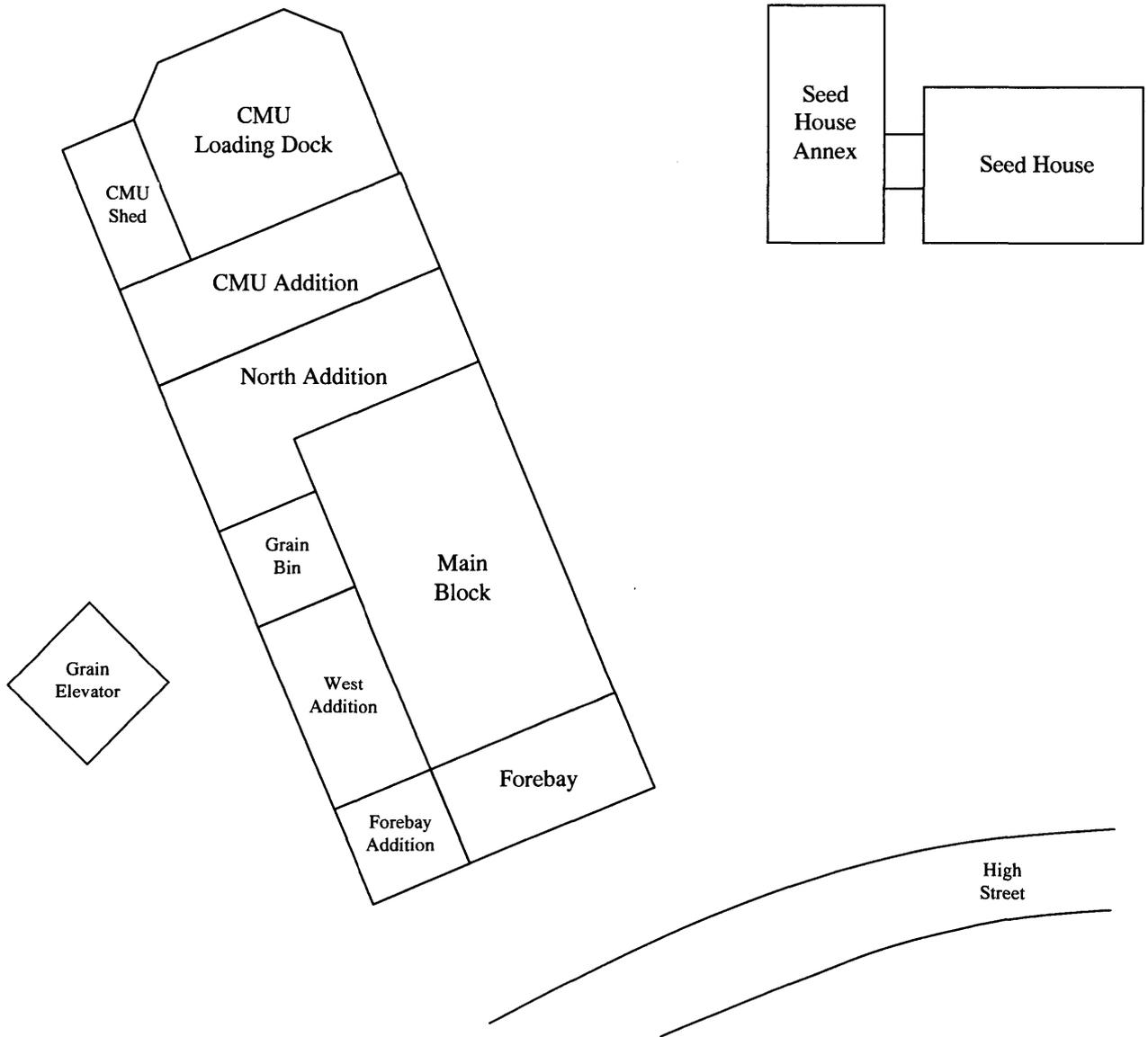
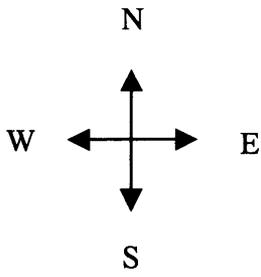
BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The National Register Boundary for Radcliffe Mill encompasses all buildings that are still associated with the Mill building, including the Mill, Seed House/Annex, and Grain Elevator. The boundary only includes the land immediately surrounding the buildings and corresponds to the present legal boundaries of the Mill.

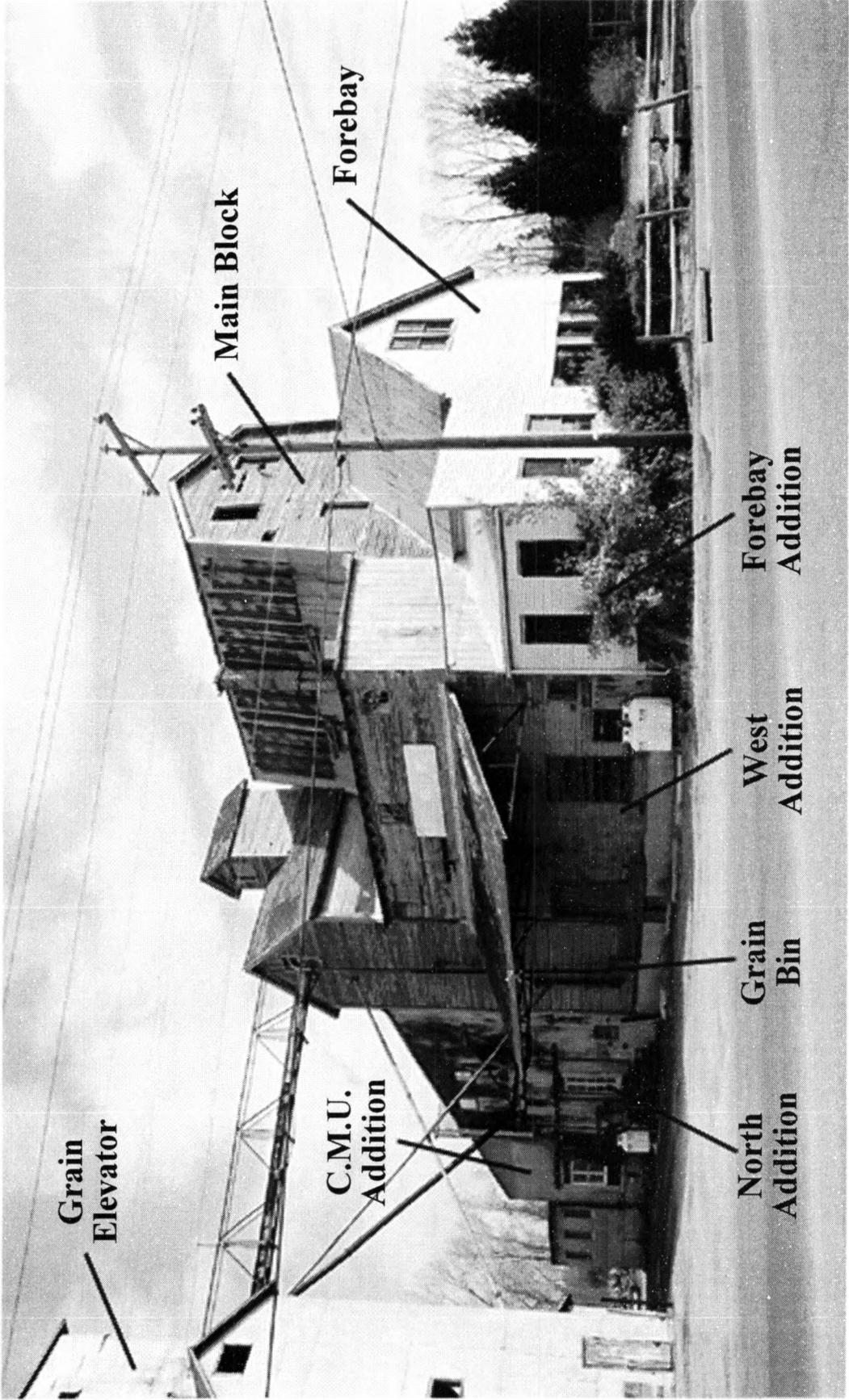
Radcliffe Mill (K-287)
860 High Street
Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

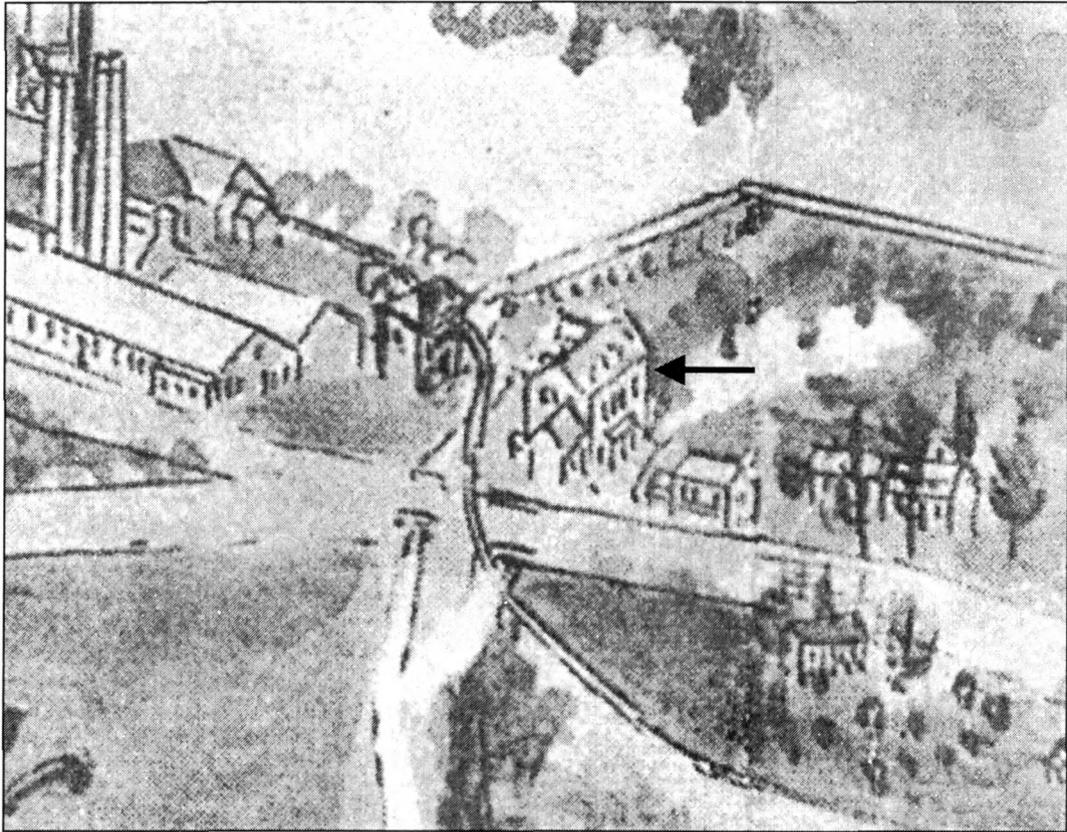
- Attachment A:** **Site Diagram**
- Attachment B:** **Diagrammatic Photograph**
- Attachment C:** **Historic Images**
T. M. Fowler's Bird's eye view of Chestertown, Kent Co., Maryland 1907
Ca. 1910 Photograph, collection of Tyler Cambell
Ca. 1920s Photograph
Ca. 1950s Photograph
- Attachment D:** **Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps**
1908
1915
1923
1960
- Attachment E:** **Sketch from 1912 Deed**
- Attachment F:** **National Register Boundary**
- Attachment G:** **USGS Quadrangle Map**



Attachment A: Site Diagram
Radcliffe Mill (K-287)
860 High Street
Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland



Attachment B: Mill Diagram
Radcliffe Mill (K-287)
860 High Street
Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland



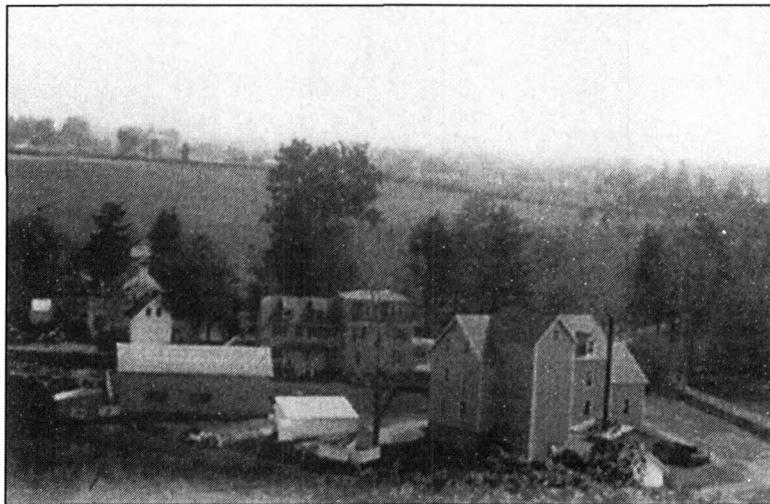
Attachment C: Historic Images

Page 1 of 4: T. M. Fowler's Bird's eye view of Chestertown, Kent Co., Maryland 1907

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

860 High Street

Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland



Attachment C: Historic Images

Page 2 of 4: ca. 1910 photograph, collection of Tyler Campbell

Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

860 High Street

Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland



Attachment C: Historic Images
Page 3 of 4: ca. 1920s photograph
Radcliffe Mill (K-287)
860 High Street
Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland



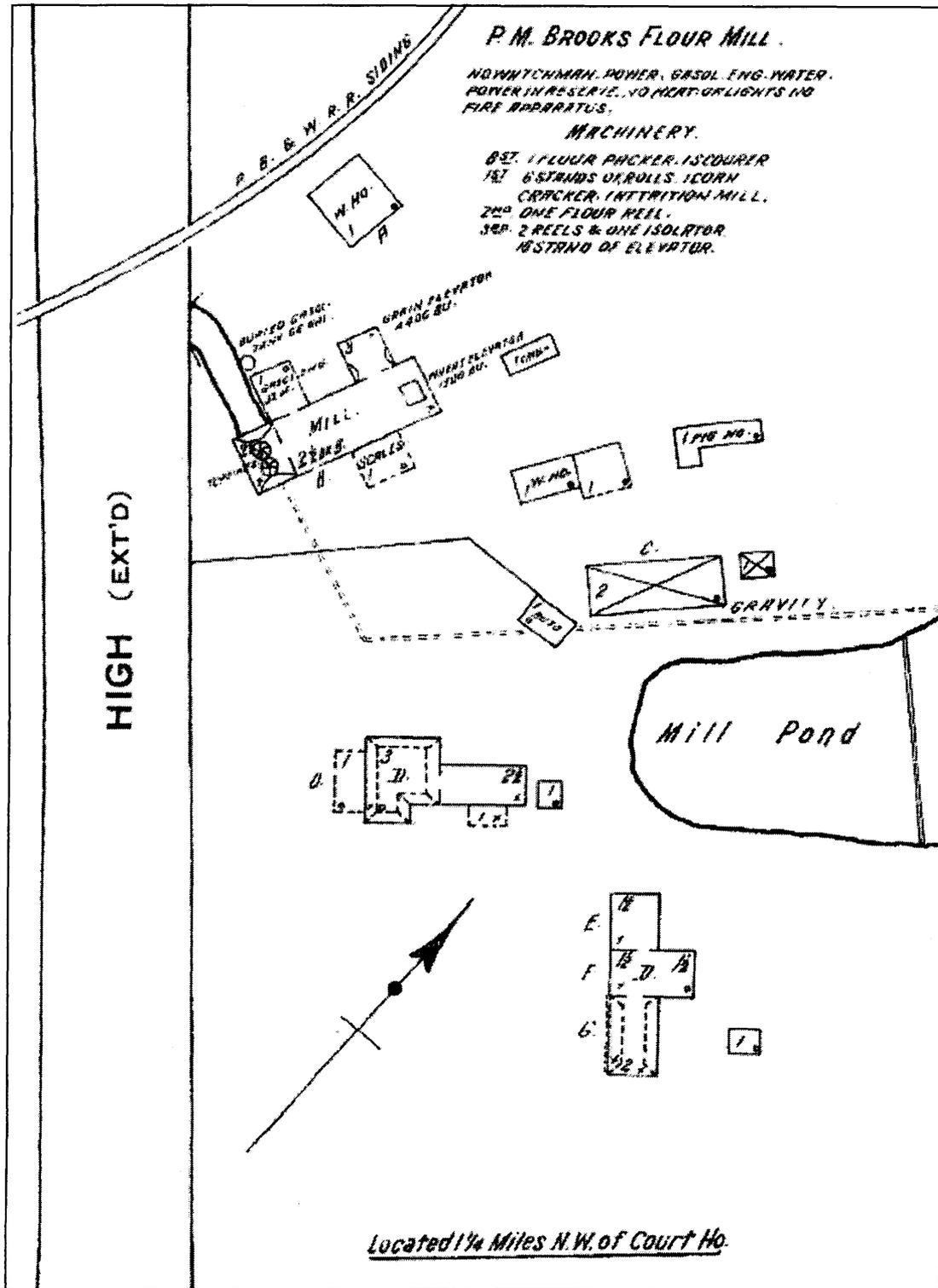
Attachment C: Historic Images

Page 4 of 4: ca. 1950s photograph

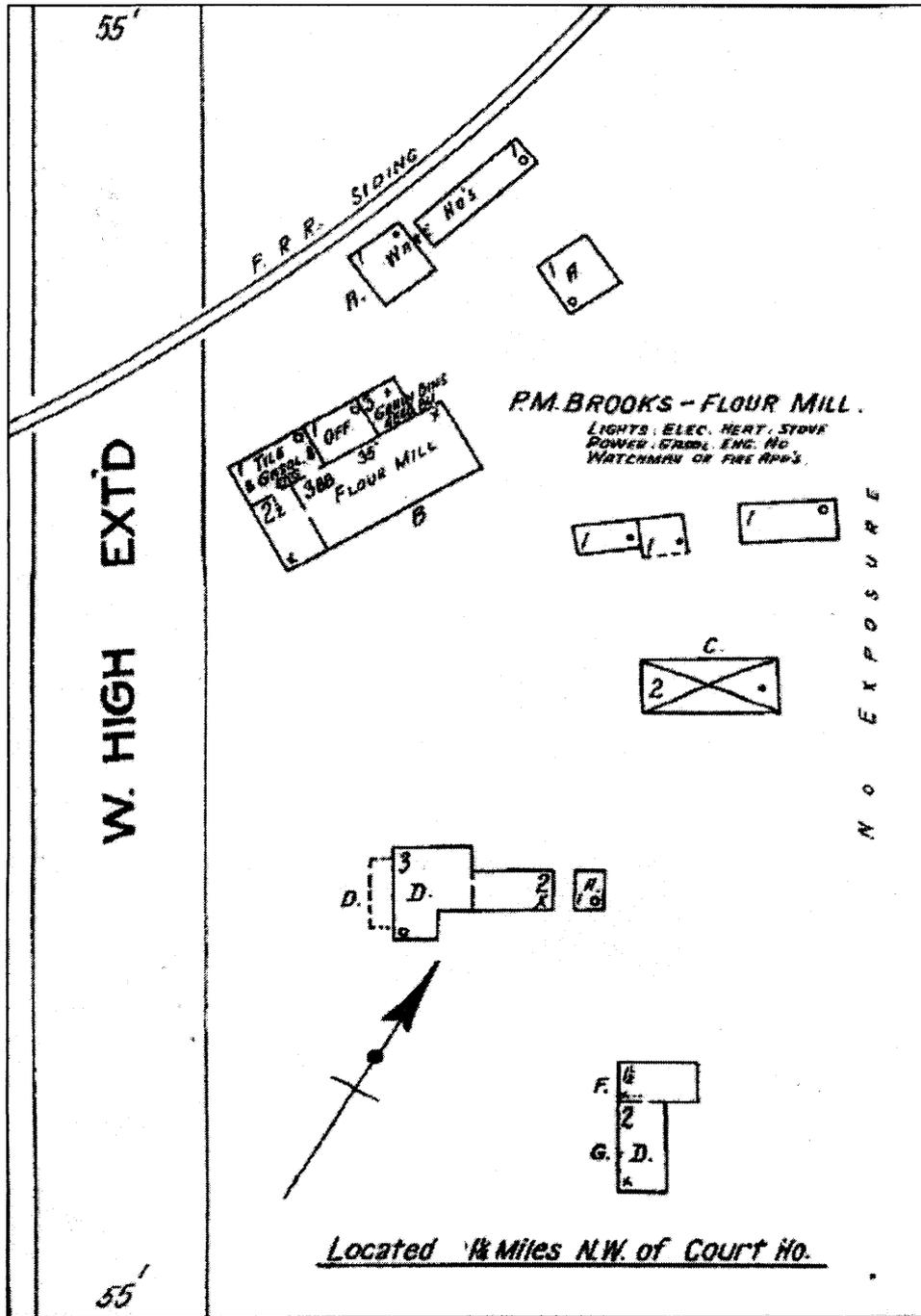
Radcliffe Mill (K-287)

860 High Street

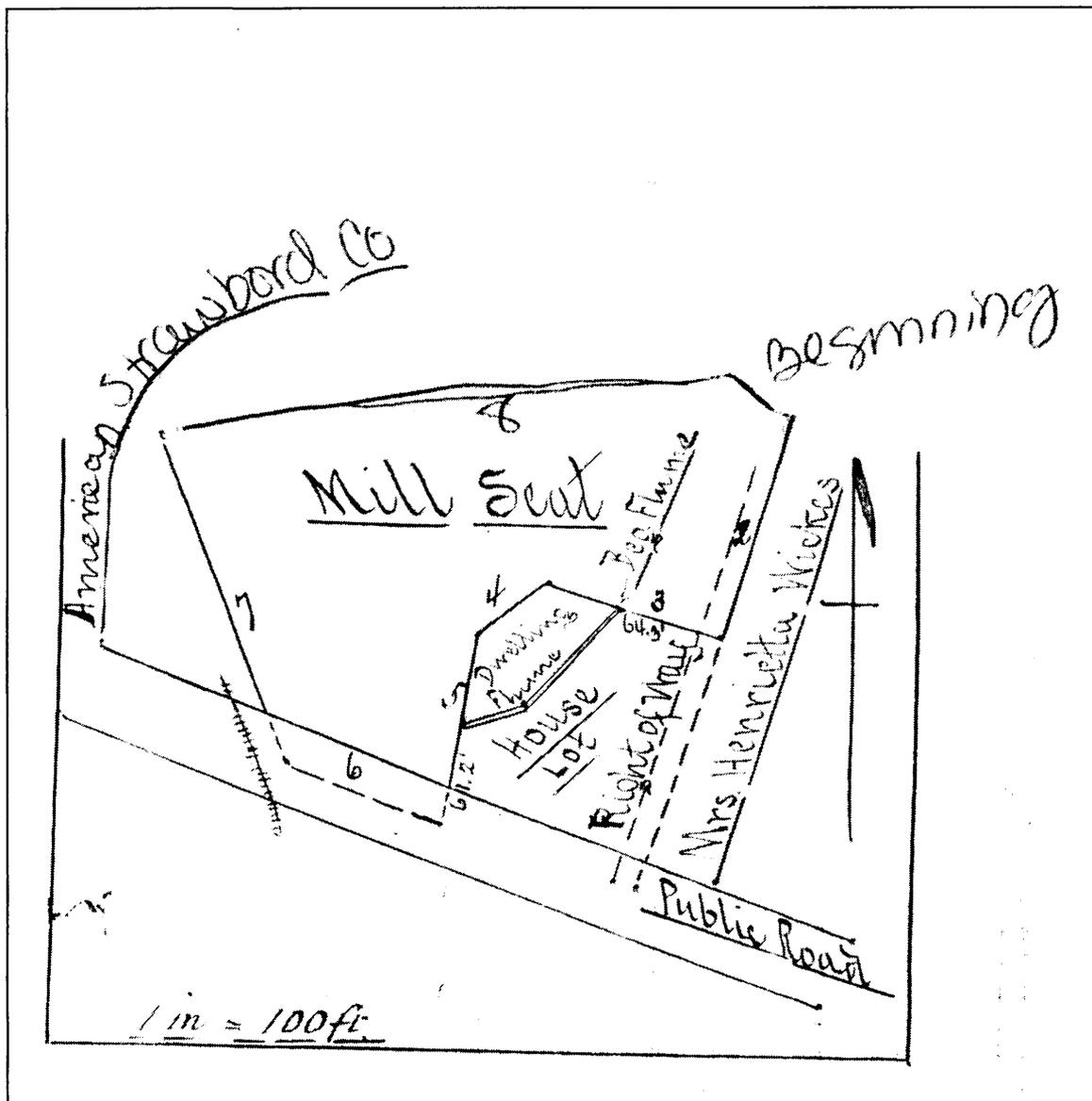
Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland



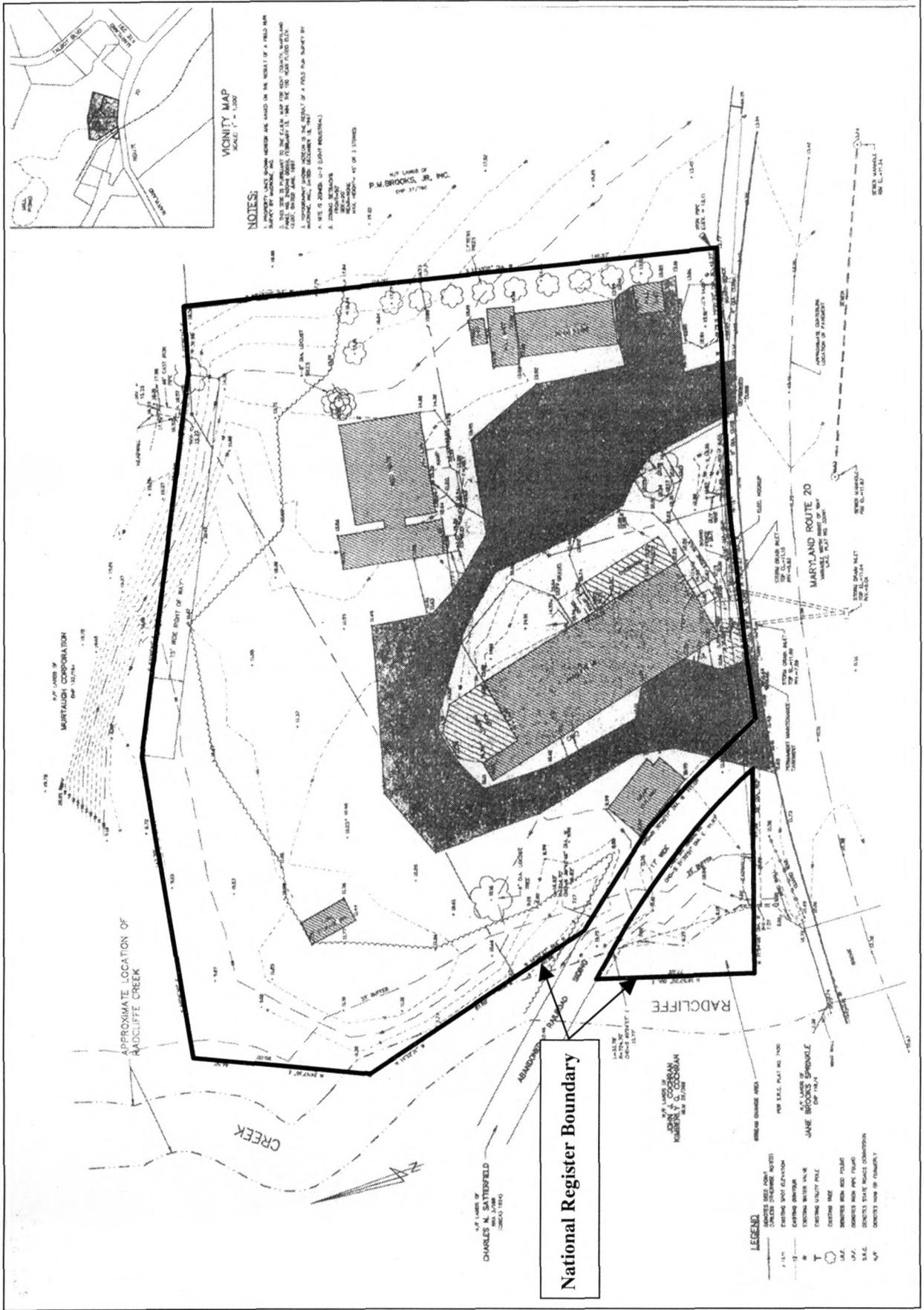
Attachment D: Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps
 Page 2 of 4: 1915 map
 Radcliffe Mill (K-287)
 860 High Street
 Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland



Attachment D: Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps
 Page 3 of 4: 1923 map
 Radcliffe Mill (K-287)
 860 High Street
 Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland

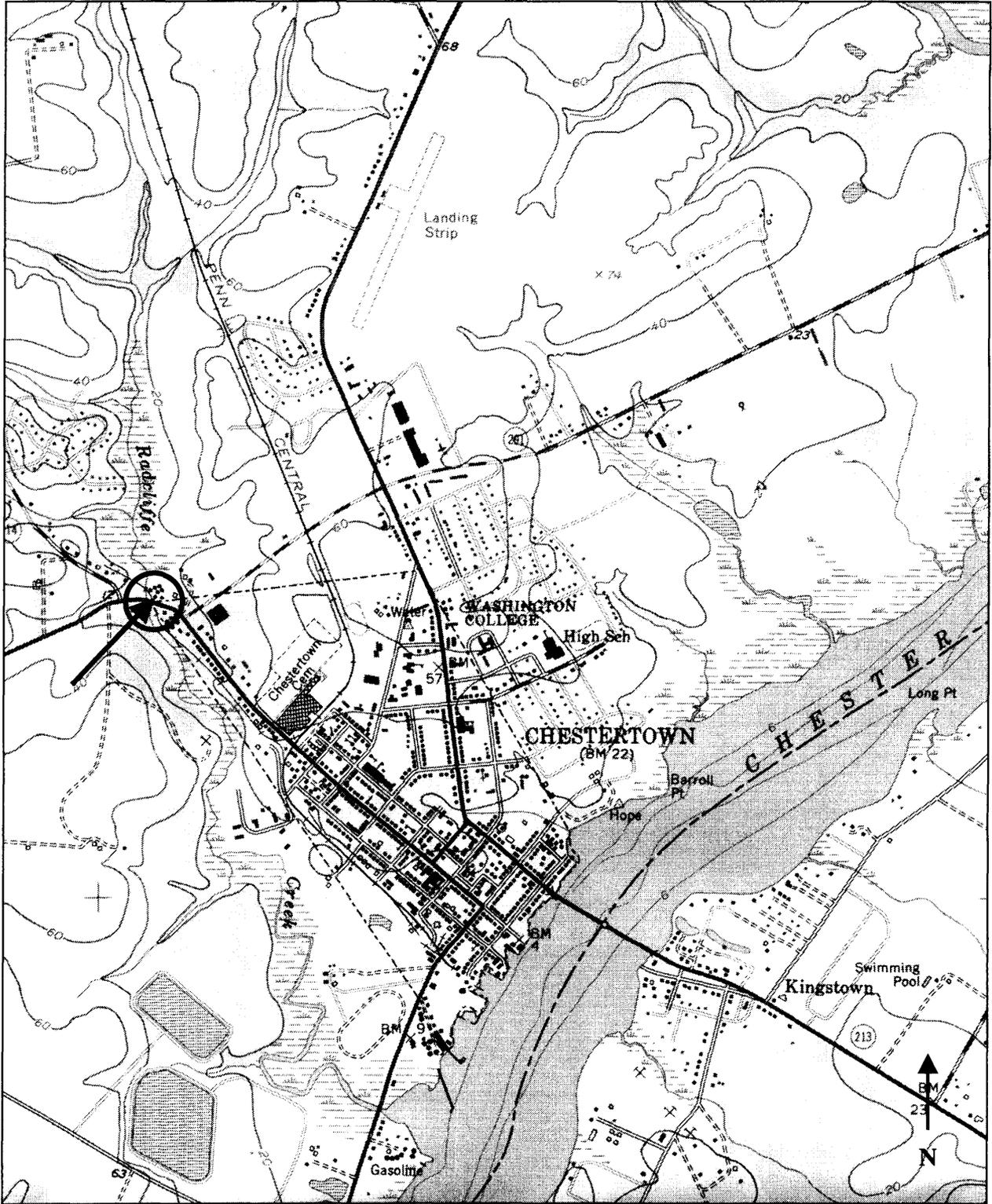


Attachment E: Sketch from 1912 Deed
 Radcliffe Mill (K-287)
 860 High Street
 Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland



National Register Boundary

Attachment F: National Register Boundary
Radcliffe Mill (K-287)
860 High Street
Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland



Attachment G: USGS Quadrangle Map (Chestertown, MD)
Radcliffe Mill (K-287)
860 High Street
Chestertown, Kent County, Maryland