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3A 008

Willow Mill  
East side of Western Run Rd.  
south of Western Rd.  
Accessible  
Ca. 1845-1850

The ruins of Willow Mill stand on the Western Run in a location thought to have been the site of at least one earlier gristmill. It represents one of the major industries of this area and is one of the few surviving structures of this type.

This building was probably erected between 1845-1850 by Thomas H. Matthews. There were also on the property a miller's house, 3 tenant houses and a saw mill. Originally powered by a turbine wheel, the later owner installed an electric motor. The mill's operations ceased in the 1940's.



MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Willow Mill

AND/OR COMMON

Western Run Mill

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

East side of Western Run Road south of Western Road

CITY, TOWN

Cockeysville

— VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

8

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

Baltimore

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Russell E. Denbow

Telephone #: 472-4285

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Cockeysville

— VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Maryland 21030

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC

Baltimore County Courthouse

Liber #: 4492

Folio #: 569

STREET & NUMBER

Washington Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Towson

STATE

Maryland

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

None

DATE

— FEDERAL — STATE — COUNTY — LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

**7 DESCRIPTION**

<b>CONDITION</b>		<b>CHECK ONE</b>	<b>CHECK ONE</b>
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Western Run Mill is a stone structure, one and one-half storeys is height on its western side, two and one-half storeys on its eastern, adjacent to Western Run, with an additional attic storey in the roof space. The gables are of frame construction, covered with weatherboards, and the roof is of corrugated steel over shingle lathe.

Three bays in length, the northerly bay of the western side contains an entrance at grade, and each of the other two bays contains a window, now missing their sash. The eastern side is similar, but each outer bay contains a door to a now-missing addition which covered the three openings, and possibly housed the undershot wheel, also missing. In the basement storey of the eastern side, a door is in the middle bay, with a window in each outer bay. A door in each of three storeys is centered in the north end, with a window on either side, and the roof peak extends out over the hoist beam high in the north end. Brick jack arches support masonry above most openings, except the doors in the north end, where the masonry appears to have been rebuilt without them.

Two shed-roofed dormers, each containing a pair of six-light sash side-by-side, light the attic storey through the westerly roof slope, and a large portion of the easterly slope was raised to form a shed-roofed dormer with windows immediately above the east wall.

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
X 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES                      Unknown                      BUILDER/ARCHITECT                      Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Willow Mill is located on the east side of Western Run Road, south of the intersection with Western Road. Standing on the southwest side of the Run, it is in a ruinous state; however, it represents one of the major industries of this district and is one of the few surviving structures of its type.

The probable date of this building is 1845 to 1850 which was the second generation of mills in the region, built after a high state of cultivation had been reached.

A study of the deeds to this land indicate the original owner to have been William Matthews, of the same family as the builder of the present structure. Matthews may have had a mill here as early as 1784. Newspaper ads indicate that there was indeed a mill here, or near here, by 1839 when the property was put up for sale. However, in 1845 the old mill had gone out of existence and a "For Sale" ad states that "there was formerly a mill on this seat, and one built there now would be in good custom..."<sup>1</sup>

In November, 1845, Thomas H. Matthews purchased the property and by 1850 the water-powered merchant mill had an annual yield of

(See Continuation Sheet #2)

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

McGrain, John W. Willow Mill. (Typescript, copyright, 1975).

Products of Industry of Maryland. Year ending June, 1850. (At Maryland State Library, Annapolis.

(See Continuation Sheet #3)

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

Catharine F. Black and James T. Wollon, Jr. AIA

ORGANIZATION

For Valleys Historical District Project

DATE

September 1976

STREET & NUMBER

1114 Bellemore Road

TELEPHONE

323-3798

CITY OR TOWN

Baltimore

STATE

Maryland

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

BA-367

Willow Mill  
Valleys Historical District

Continuation Sheet #1

Question #7 Continued

A small one storey stone addition with a flat roof stands at the northeast corner.

The entire interior is gutted of all floors, walls, partitions and equipment, from the basement to the roof.

Willow Mill  
Valleys Historical District

## Continuation Sheet #2

Question #8 Significance

\$55,000 in flour and meal.<sup>2</sup> Matthews also added a saw mill, miller's house and three tenant houses.<sup>3</sup> Undoubtedly, the construction of western Run Turnpike in 1868 contributed greatly to the ease with which grain could be brought to the site.

Thomas H. Matthews died in 1897 and the property was deeded to Oliver J. Matthews and subsequently passed to several owners before being reconditioned in 1936 by the installation of an electric motor, replacing a turbine wheel.<sup>4</sup>

Extensive flooding in 1972 and the failure of plans to restore the building have left it in a state of ruin - a rare structure, and one worthy of preservation.

1. The Baltimore Sun, March 13, 1845
2. Products of Industry of Maryland. Year ending June, 1850.
3. McGrain, p. 2.
4. Ibid. p.3.

Continuation Sheet #5

Question #9 Continued

Hopkins, G. M. Atlas of Baltimore County, Maryland. (Philadelphia, 1877).

Sidney, J. C. Map of the City and County of Baltimore, Maryland. (Baltimore, 1850).