

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Morgan's Mill

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Southside of SR 1331, 0.2 miles west of junction with US 64.

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

VICINITY OF Brevard

STATE

North Carolina

CODE
37

COUNTY

Transylvania

CODE
175

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<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

Mr. Ray Nicholson

STREET & NUMBER

Route 2, Box 497

CITY, TOWN

Brevard

VICINITY OF

STATE

North Carolina 28712

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Transylvania County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Brevard

STATE

North Carolina

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

DATE

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input 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 slightly	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Morgan's Mill is a water-powered grist mill that has been in almost continuous operation since the mid-19th century. The mill complex, located on Morgan Mill Creek six miles west of Brevard in central Transylvania County, consists of the mill proper (with its 30' diameter iron, overshot water wheel, and 1' diameter iron-pipe flume), and four twentieth century shed outbuildings. It is a custom mill¹ of the type once commonly found throughout the rural Appalachians in the nineteenth century. The mill building itself is formed of three distinct units: the original mid-nineteenth century heavy frame portion, a late nineteenth century balloon frame addition, and the final mid-twentieth century shed/porch section.²

The original 20' square building is of heavy frame construction with all sills, posts, girts, plates, joists, and studs being mortised, tenoned, and pegged. It is covered with non-feathered weatherboarding and rests on a stone pier foundation. The framing timbers on the northwest (wheel) side of the building are exceedingly heavy; the sill and corner posts are 11" x 14". Refinements such as glass windows and interior sheathing are not present. There were two doors, one on the southeast wall, the other upstairs on the southwest wall, near the west corner. This second floor door--the four-foot wide opening has since been weatherboarded over--originally had a ramp leading from it to the old road bed which ran along the steep hillside adjacent to the southwest wall. There is evidence that there was at least one window immediately above the mill entrance door on the southeast wall.

Except for the flooring and some joists, the interior of the original mill building appears to be the same today as when built. The first floor is on three levels. On the highest level, or "stone floor,"³ are the original two sets of French burr (or buhr) stones and their cases. Also on this floor are the stone crane, screw jack, and stone tongs used to lift and invert the runner stone when dressing of the stone becomes necessary. An automatic corn sheller, probably early 20th century, is the only remaining piece of milling equipment on the stone floor.

The main level, two feet below the stone floor, is called the meal floor. Here, meal ground above falls into the meal bin from whence it is scooped into sacks. Next to the meal bin are the scales (spring type) which, in turn, stand next to the steep stairs which lead to the upper floor.

The lowest level, one foot below the meal floor, contains the flour bolter. The bolter currently in place--though no longer used--is a 19th century type, and judging from the homemade hardware, it is probably original.

Although the original mill had a wooden water wheel and flume, in about 1915 they were replaced with a 30' diameter iron wheel and an unusual, goose-necked, iron-pipe flume. The power transferral system, a complex one of iron gears (some with wooden teeth), pullies, and belts used to drive the assorted machinery, is nineteenth century and may be original with this mill.

Along the northeast wall of the original building is an open shed which shelters the shaft, pullies, and belts which drive the corn sheller, bolter, and hammer mill. The belts pass into the building through holes cut through the weatherboarding.

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In the late nineteenth century a balloon frame addition was built onto the southeast end of the original building. In this addition are the hammer mill and grain storage bin (which was upstairs in the original building). The remainder of this section is used for storage. The floor is level with the main floor level of the original. At the same time this addition was built, several new floor joists, ceiling joists, flooring, and roof were added to the original portion. Current flooring is 1" x 6" tongue-and-groove pine. Rafters in the older section are four inch diameter poles; in the newer portion, they are undressed 2" x 4" pine. The entire roof is tin. Most of the original studs in the southeast wall were removed, leaving no partition between the old and new sections. The entrance door, on the southeast wall of the new section, is a "dutch" door, a type traditionally used in eighteenth and nineteenth century mills. In fact, this door is probably the original one, reframed in the newer addition. The attic floor of both the newer and older sections is used exclusively for storage.

About 1950, a shed roof and a narrow porch were extended from the southeast end of the mill. In 1958, the southwest end of this shed was enclosed to make a small room for the miller. A brick stove flue was built and small wood stove and chairs added. This room is covered with board and batten siding.

Three of the four outbuildings are used for general storage. The one nearest the mill, which has a gable roof, is covered with the old shakes (called "boards" locally) which formerly covered the mill building before it was reroofed with tin. The other two storage buildings have shed roofs of tin. The fourth building is a "WPA toilet."⁴

FOOTNOTES

¹The U. S. Bureau of Census is the 19th century classified grist mill as either "custom" (meal and flour locally used) or "manufacture" (meal and flour exported from local area). There were no manufacture mills in Transylvania County in 1870. See: U. S. Bureau of the Census, A Compendium of the North Carolina Census (June 1, 1870) (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1972), p. 835.

²See attached floor plan.

³Milling terms quoted are from Howell, Charles and Allan Keller, The Mill (Tarrytown, N.Y.: Sleepy Hollow Restorations, 1977).

⁴So termed during an interview with current property owner Ray Nicholson, March 12, 1979.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1855

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Morgan's Mill represents an important aspect of a past, traditional way of life once of crucial importance to almost every rural North Carolinian--the milling of flour, meal and feed. Located just out of sight of US Highway 64 west of Brevard, Transylvania County, the mill is sited against a steep, heavily wooded hillside along Morgan Mill Creek. It has been in almost continuous operation since about 1855, and is one of the last remaining water-powered grist mills of a type that at one time dotted the rural North Carolina landscape. Originally--as now--the mill provided milling service for local residents. Both the heavy frame and later balloon frame sections of the mill building are clearly exposed, and are typical examples of the traditional construction techniques used for such small-scale commercial enterprises. Because the mill is still operated almost daily, its historical and educational significance is greatly enhanced; it looks, smells and operates almost exactly as it originally did in the 19th century. In fact, much of the milling equipment is probably original, including the two sets of French burr stones and the flour bolter.

CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

A. This operating, water-powered grist mill is one of the last remaining, "unspoiled" mills representative of rural, custom milling of the 19th century in North Carolina.

C. The mill building itself clearly embodies the traditional form, plan and construction techniques used for such small, rural, commercial structures. Both the early heavy frame and later balloon frame construction techniques can be seen and compared within the same building.

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Six miles west of Brevard, North Carolina, on Morgan Mill Creek, stands the last operating water-powered grist mill in Transylvania County, and one of the few remaining in the state. The mill, currently owned by Mr. Ray Nicholson, has been operated by octagenarian Albert McKinney for the past 24 years. Although ownership of the mill property (and, hence, exact construction date of the mill itself) is somewhat sketchy prior to 1861 when Transylvania County was formed from portions of Henderson and Jackson Counties, best estimates place the mill's construction around 1855.

Since its construction, Morgan's Mill has exchanged hands at least eight times. The earliest recorded property transaction concerning the mill property is January 1, 1876. On this date, J. M. Morgan, Sr. deeded the property "on the waters of Peter Weaver's Creek" to his son, J. M. Morgan, Jr.¹ There is apparently no remaining record (deed or will) to indicate exactly when J. M. Morgan, Sr. acquired the land. In 1918, J. M. Morgan, Jr. died and his property passed via intestate laws to his heirs at law. On March 14, 1918, several conveyances were made by his heirs to one J. F. Morgan² who, in turn, reconveyed 290 acres of the mill property to George P. Morgan on the same date. G. P. Morgan was the last in the long line of Morgans to own the property, for in September, 1937, he sold the mill to Mr. S. M. White, Mr. W. L. Teasley, and Teasley's wife, Olive.⁴ These owners kept the property only about two months for on November 5, 1937, they deeded the land over to Mrs. Carrie A. Mullinax.⁵ Mrs. Mullinax, after seven years of ownership, sold the property to Mr. Ollis O. Moore and his wife, Lola S. Moore.⁶ They in turn sold the property in 1954 to the current owner, Mr. Ray Nicholson, for "ten dollars and other considerations."⁷

As there are no documentary sources available from which to confirm a construction date, the best indications are gotten from oral history. The current owner, Mr. Nicholson, for example, says the "old timers" insist the mill was built "a few years before the Civil War." This researcher has found no evidence to contradict this general construction date and the building itself supports an antebellum date as well.

Although the mill operates less as a viable commercial enterprise than as a labor of love by Mr. Nicholson and Mr. McKinney, its importance as an educational facility for the entire region grows. School children, both in organized groups and individually frequently visit and acquire a glimpse of an important part of past traditions. The mill, in fact, was intensively studied recently by a group of high school students from Rabun Gap, Georgia, who were involved in a Foxfire project.

FOOTNOTES

¹Transylvania County Deed Books, Office of the Register of Deeds, Transylvania County Courthouse, Brevard, North Carolina, Deed Book 4:90; hereinafter cited as Transylvania Deed Book.

²Transylvania Deed Books 37:477, 479, 481, and 40:384.

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- ³Transylvania Deed Book 40:384.
- ⁴Transylvania Deed Book 70:249.
- ⁵Transylvania Deed Book 70:323.
- ⁶Transylvania Deed Book 82:102.
- ⁷Transylvania Deed Book 111:156.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Transylvania County Deed Books, Office of the Register of Deeds, Transylvania County Courthouse, Brevard, North Carolina.

U. S. Bureau of the Census, A Compendium of the Ninth Census (June 1, 1870)
(Washington: Government Printing Office, 1872).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY _____

UTM REFERENCES

A

--

--

--

 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B

--

--

--

 ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Beginning where barbed wire fence crosses Peter Weaver's Creek north of mill building, continue southeast along the creek to intersection with driveway. From this corner, continue in a straight line to top of ridge going through pine tree at edge of clear field (approximately 215°). Continue along ridge line in northwesterly direction to where barbed wire fence crosses ridge line. Continue northeasterly along this fence to beginning corner.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Blanton Owen, Consultant

ORGANIZATION

Western Office, N. C. Division of Archives
and History

DATE

May 10, 1979

STREET & NUMBER

13 Veterans Drive

TELEPHONE

704-298-5024

CITY OR TOWN

Asheville,

STATE

North Carolina 28805

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

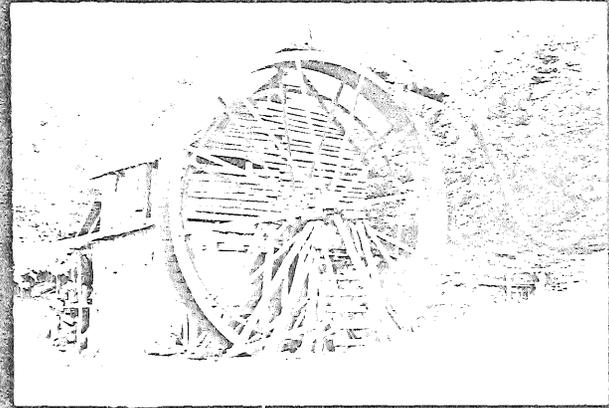
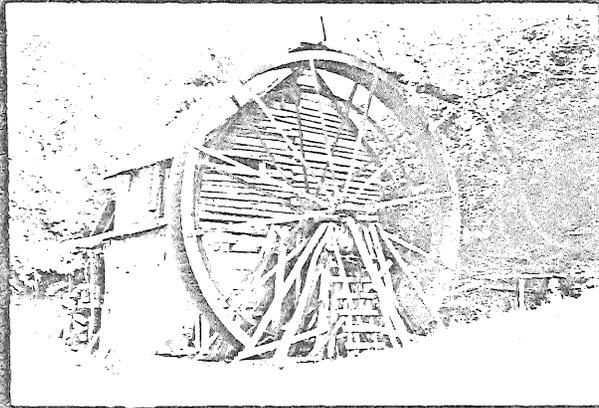
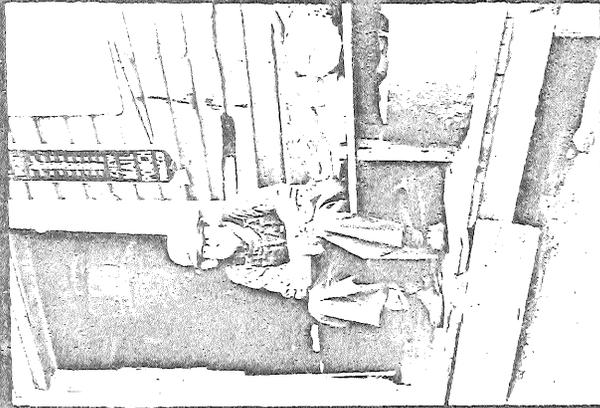
DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
ATTEST:

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

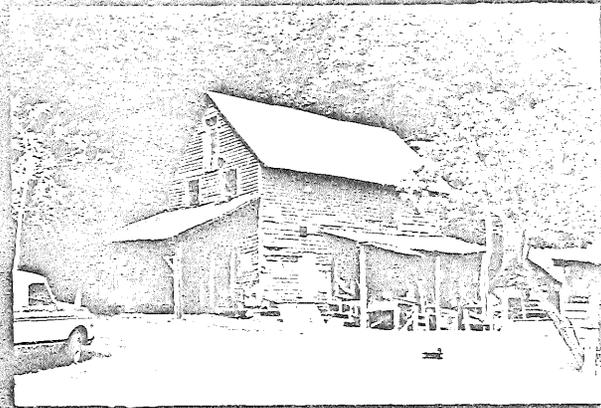
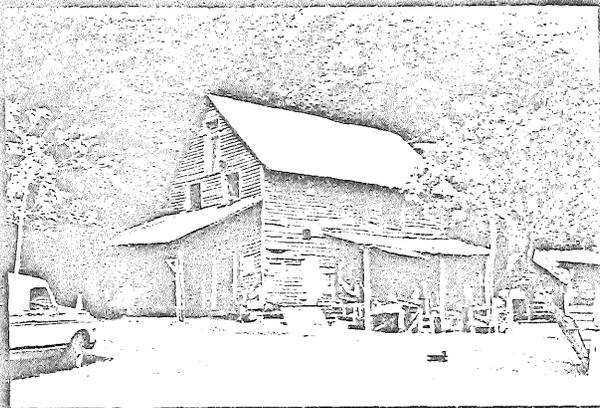
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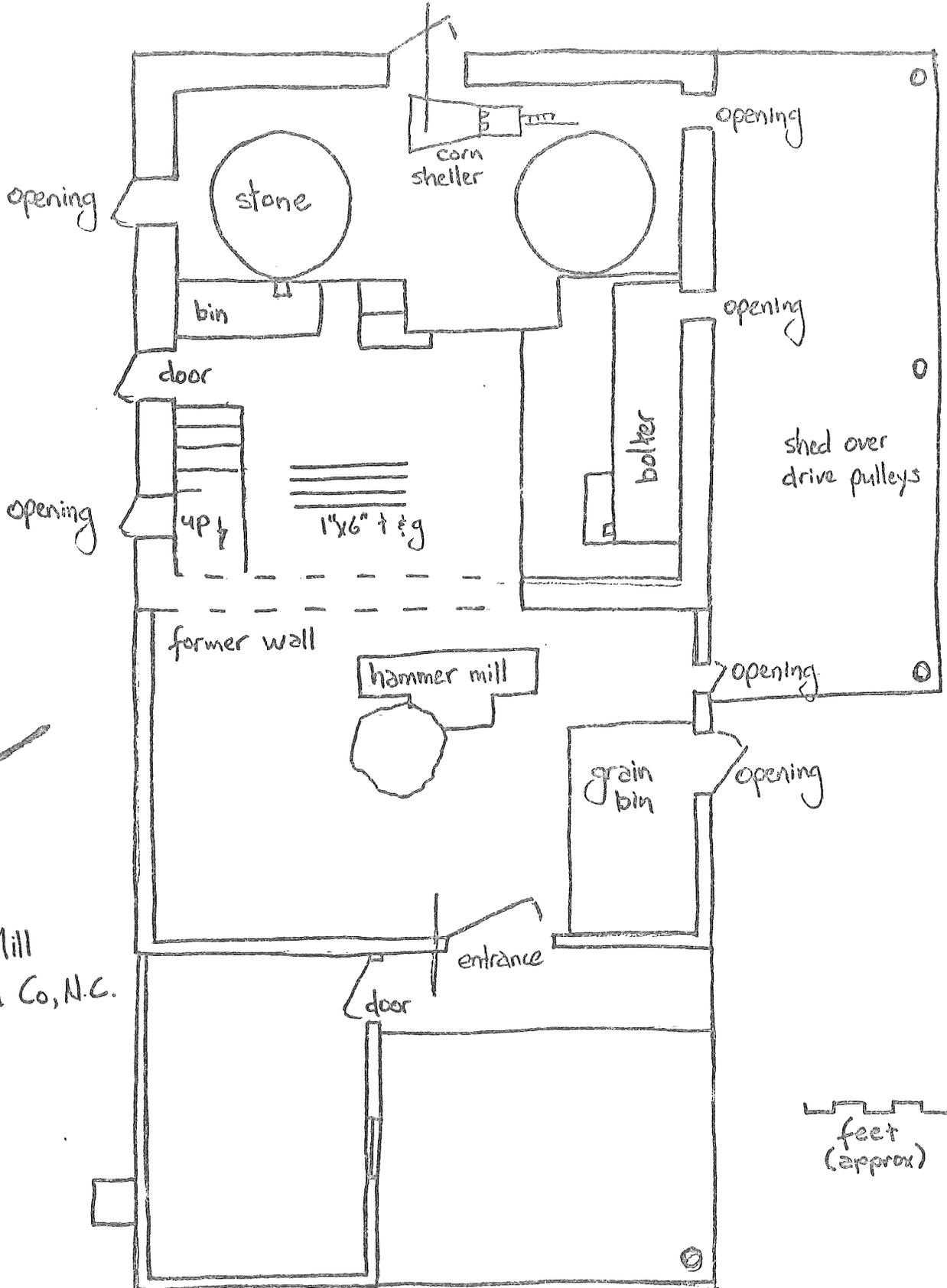
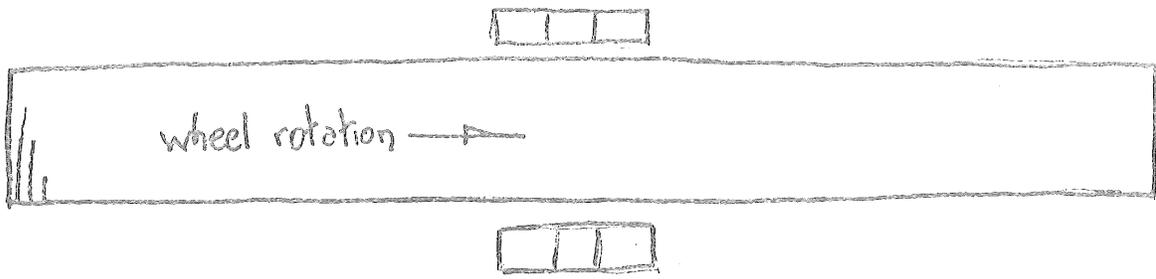
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LM 5063

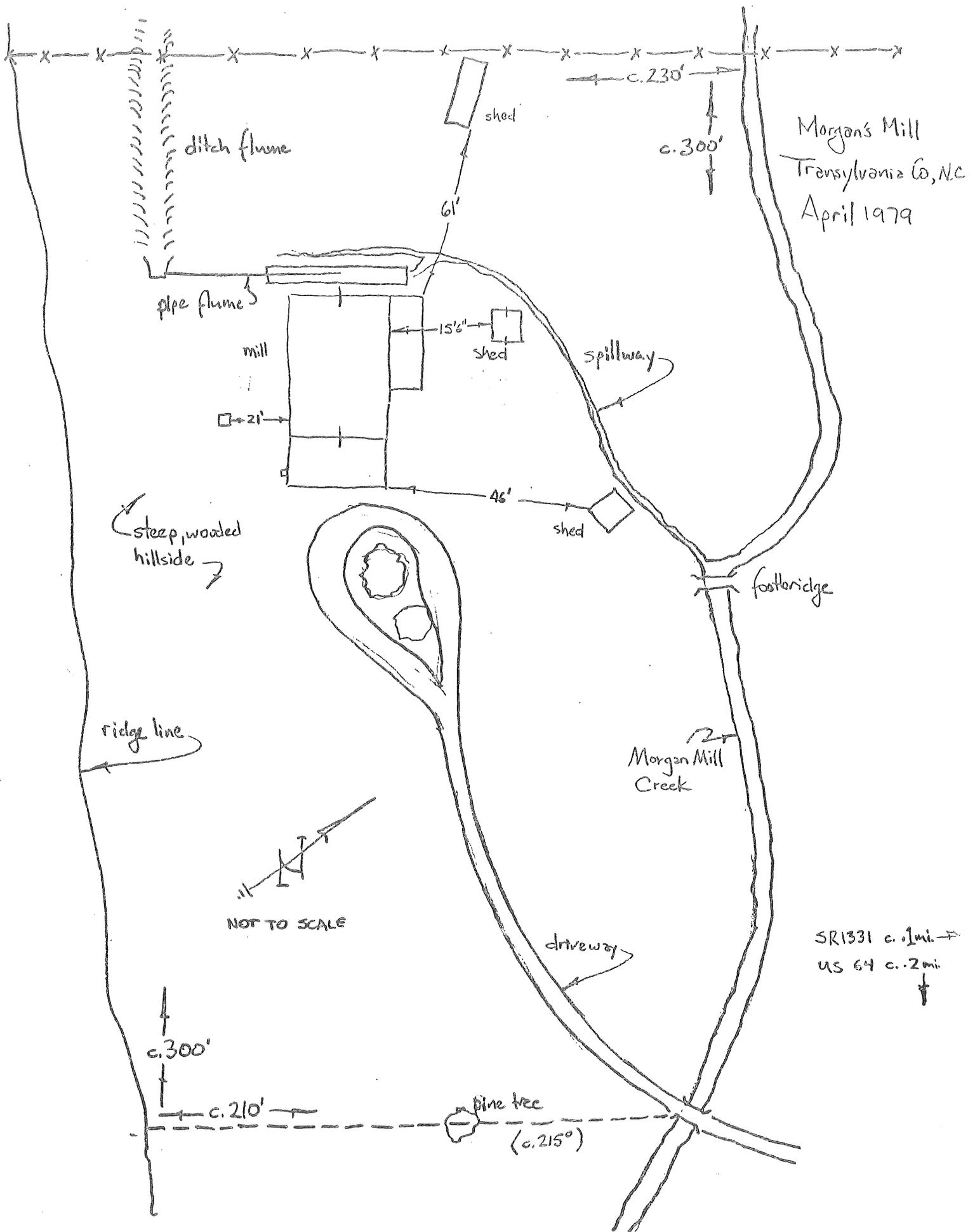
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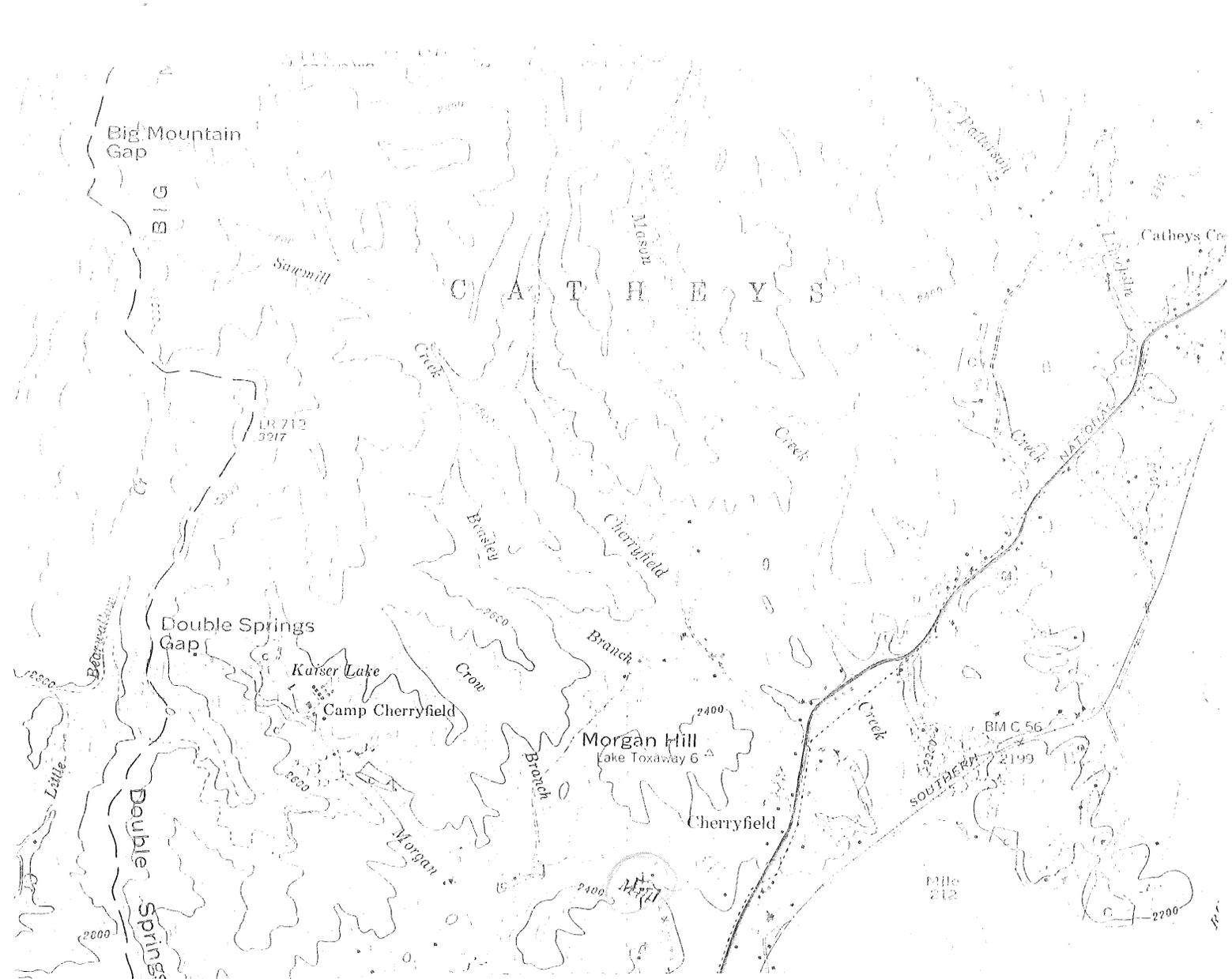




Morgan's Mill
Transylvania Co, N.C.

feet
(approx)





Pelt Morgan's Mill
 Brevard vic., Transylvania County, N.C.
 1.5 acres
 Rosman Quadrangle
 Scale 1:24000
 UTM References: Zone 17

Easting 335050
 Northing 3893340

