

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Day - Vandevander Mill

and or common Old Mill at Harmon

2. Location

street & number State Route #32 not for publication

city, town Harmon X vicinity of

state West Virginia code 54 county Randolph code 083

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 checked="" 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 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	N/A in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	N/A being considered	<input checked="" 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 Samuel and Margaret Bucher

street & number Mountain Clinic

city, town Harmon vicinity of state West Virginia

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Randolph County Court House

street & number Randolph Avenue

city, town Elkins state West Virginia

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes X no

date federal state county local

depository for survey records

city, town state

7. Description

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date N/A

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

In 1877 a new gristmill built on Dry Fork River, near the small town of Harman, began operation. The two story building with substructure housed the two water turbines which were to continue to run the mill until the present day. Water turbines were used in place of a waterwheel for two reasons. First, the drop in the river was not sufficient for a waterwheel, and secondly, a water turbin doesn't freeze up as quickly as a waterwheel during the cold winters.

The mill prospered and grew to include a wood planing mill and a white flour mill. Elaborate networks of belt and pulley arrangements graced all levels. Elevators carried grain and flour from floor to floor and bin to bin. A generator and storage batteries were used to produce electrical power during the day, to be used at night for lighting, as the mill operated 24 hours a day.

A typical day began with shelling corn, then cleaning it and finally the corn was ground into corn meal on the stone buhrs. The empty cob was also ground separately to be used as poultry litter.

Today The Old Mill looks much the same as it did nearly a century ago, a little older and perhaps a little cleaner. On the first floor the gristmill still grinds corn, wheat, rye and buckwheat into their respective flours, which visitors may buy, along with the crafts they will find on the second floor.

The Old Mill is a water powered gristmill, which is a mill that grinds grain into flour. It is a single structure, rectangular in shape, consisting of two stories and a substructure.

The original structure is hand hewn post and beam construction; it was put together to last, by the skilled branch of carpentry known as joinery, which utilizes pegged mortise and tenon joints at the main junctures in the mill's framework. The exterior covering is German siding, and the gable roof has original framing, but the standing seam metal is a later addition.

Approximately 50 years after the original structure was built (c.1927), a major addition, with a shed roof, was added on the north and east sides. On the east side the shed roof is partially obscured by a false front. The clapboard siding used on the addition was also added to the exterior walls of the original structure.

A distinctive feature, typical of grist mills is the three exterior doors, one above the other on each of the three levels.

The two most important interior parts to the gristmill are still present and functional. One part, the power source, is a Fitz Burnham water turbine. The turbine powers the original grinding stones that still grind flour and meal.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Old Mill at Harmon, Randolph County
Continuation sheet

Item number 7

Page 2

For NPS use only

received

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The north side of the addition houses a large wood planer which is still operational and works off the turbine. The east side of the addition contains a second water turbine and a unique power transmission system of belts and pulleys from the turbine to an overhead line shaft.

The mill derives its power from two water turbines, using the water from the Dry Fork River. Originally the mill consisted of one turbine which operated the grist mill and a white flour mill operated on the upper levels. In time the planing mill was added, and the building enlarged to include a second turbine. This was used to power the smaller machinery-corn sheller, grind stone, seed cleaner, etc. At present the original turbine still powers the stone buhrs that grind the grist for the farmer or the tourist.

The 48-inch diameter stones rest face-to-face horizontally. Whole grain is poured in through a hole in the center of the top stone which rotates atop the stationary bottom stone.

Power is provided by an iron turbine which is propelled by the swift water of the millrace beneath the floor. Each millstone weighs over half a ton. There are four stones in all, making two sets which stand side by side. They are covered by circular casings when in operation which guide the meal along the covering's edge into the hole leading to the bin.

United States Department of the Interior
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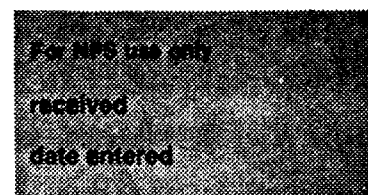
**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

Old Mill at Harmon, Randolph County

Continuation sheet

Item number 7 & 10

Page



#7 Historic Archaeology

Above ground evidence - foundations, ruins, etc. - of mill ancillary or support structures do not exist within the nominated boundaries of the mill property. There is no indication that support buildings occupied the site, or that any residence in Harmon, or Harmon vicinity, can be identified as the miller's residence.

Contributing/Noncontributing Resources

Mill building	-	1 building
Tail race	-	1 structure
Mill pond	-	1 structure
Total	-	3 resources

#10 Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated resources include the mill pond, mill building, and tail race [a rubble stone trough consisting of a wall on each side of the water route as the water exits the substructure of the mill, a distance of about 50 feet beyond the mill building.] that stand within a rectangular boundary 800 feet long by 100 feet wide. Beginning at the entrance of the Bucher Clinic access road (approximately 2200 feet north of the Harmon town limits) proceed 800 feet north along the west edge of State Route #32, thence 100 feet in a straight line in a northwesterly direction, thence in a line 800 feet long along the west side of a gravel road which borders the mill pond on the west side, thence 100 feet southwestward to the point of beginning, to form a rectangle.

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 type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates c. 1877; c.1927 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Old Mill at Harmon, Randolph County, West Virginia, is significant because it evidences structural, architectural, and mechanical/operational components which are well preserved and rare within the locale of the subject historic property. The only surviving mill in Randolph County, West Virginia's largest county in land area, the Old Mill at Harmon is a living, operational ensemble whose principal features include water turbines (power source), stone buhrs, shellers, seed cleaners, and supporting apparatus such as the mill pond, mill race, and tail race. Another significant feature of the mill is its century-old timber frame construction exhibiting joining techniques and finish details no longer used in building.

The Old Mill is a working mill museum, possessing many features common to grist mills in the 19th and early 20th century. Powered by the original water turbine, the large grind stones still produce fine quality flour and meal.

Culturally grist mills were very important in community life. In addition to providing the food staples of flour and corn meal, the mill was often the center of community activities. In fact, a mill proprietor was exempt from military service because his function in the local community was considered a more important contribution to the stability of the country than his serving in the military.

Due to the required location of mills, near a stream for the water power, relatively few mills remain in West Virginia. Being near a stream usually meant being in the flood plain, and many mills were destroyed by floods. Of the mills that survived the floods, only a very small number continue to operate, and of those that still operate, even fewer use the original water power system.

The other significant feature of the Old Mill relates to its structural character and equipment. The original structure, built c.1877, is a mortice and tenon, hand hewn post and beam structure. The additions built in the 1920's are studded wall frame construction. The large timber framing system is part of the visible, large open space within the building that provides a sense of place and time. In addition to the smells of various grain products which permeate the building, the sounds of moving machinery and running water add still more flavor to the mill atmosphere. Part of the sound comes from the ring and pinion gear of the water turbine. The turbine, housed in a 7-foot deep water box (penstock), uses 777 cubic feet of water per minute and develops 7 horsepower. The turbine actually makes 124 revolutions per minute. Those millstones which move, also create their own sounds.

In the words of writer Michael Snyder, in Show Time Magazine, "The Old Mill at Harmon symbolizes the resourcefulness of our past. Even more importantly it also is a model for our future. Let us hope that during its second hundred years men will learn once again to use perpetual energy sources. Something the Old Mill began doing in 1877".

9. Major Bibliographical References

Deed Books, Vol. 62, p. 22; 67, p. 147; 108, p. 280; 129, p. 467; 138, p. 36; 196, p. 479.
"The Old Mill", Mountain Industries, Harmon, West Virginia, n.d.
Snyder, Michael. "The Old Mill at Harmon", Show Time Magazine, Sunday Gazette-Mail,
Charleston, WV, August 10, 1980.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 2 acres

Quadrangle name Harmon, WV

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References

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4	3	1	0	1	2	0
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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

C

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Verbal boundary description and justification

(See Continuation Sheet)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	county	code
-------	-----	------	--------	------

state	code	county	code
-------	------	--------	------

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Lester and Mary Beth Lind Co-Managers

organization Mountain Industries, Inc. date December 1, 1986

street & number P.O. Box 65 telephone 304/277-4427

city or town Harmon state West Virginia

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 State Historic Preservation Officer date

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I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

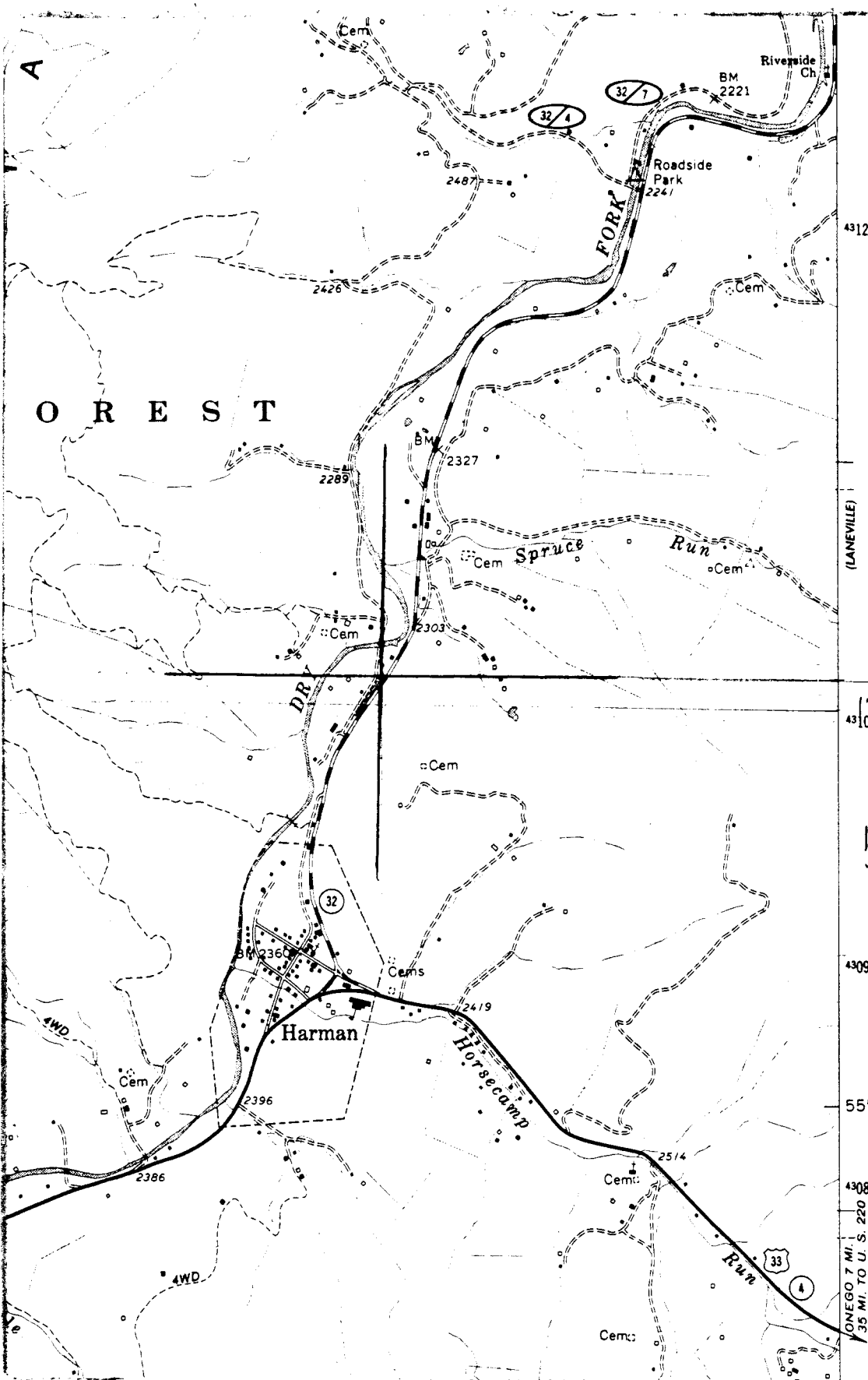
date

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration



O R E S T

LANEVILLE)

OLD MILL AT HARMON
STATE ROUTE 32
HARMON VICINITY
RANDOLPH CO., W.VA.

UTM :

$$43 \overline{) 7628120} \quad 43 \overline{) 120}$$

HARMON, W.VA. QUAD.
7.5 MIN.

4309

55'

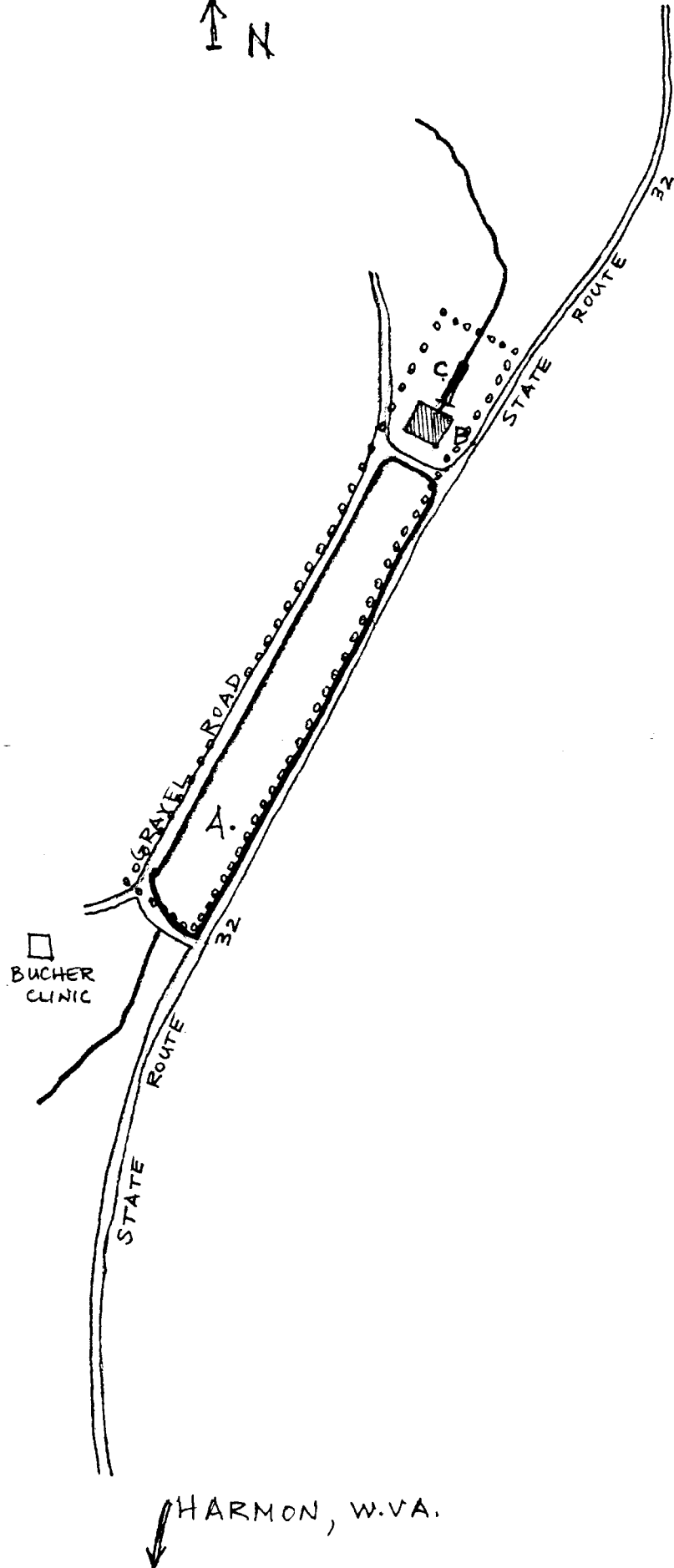
4308

ONEGO 7 MI.
35 MI. TO U. S.

SKETCH MAP



OLD MILL AT HARMON
STATE ROUTE 32
HARMON VIC.
RANDOLPH COUNTY
W.VA.



- A. MILL POND
- B. MILL BLDG.
- C. TAIL RACE

1 INCH = 200 FEET
oooooo = BOUNDARY
2 ACRES

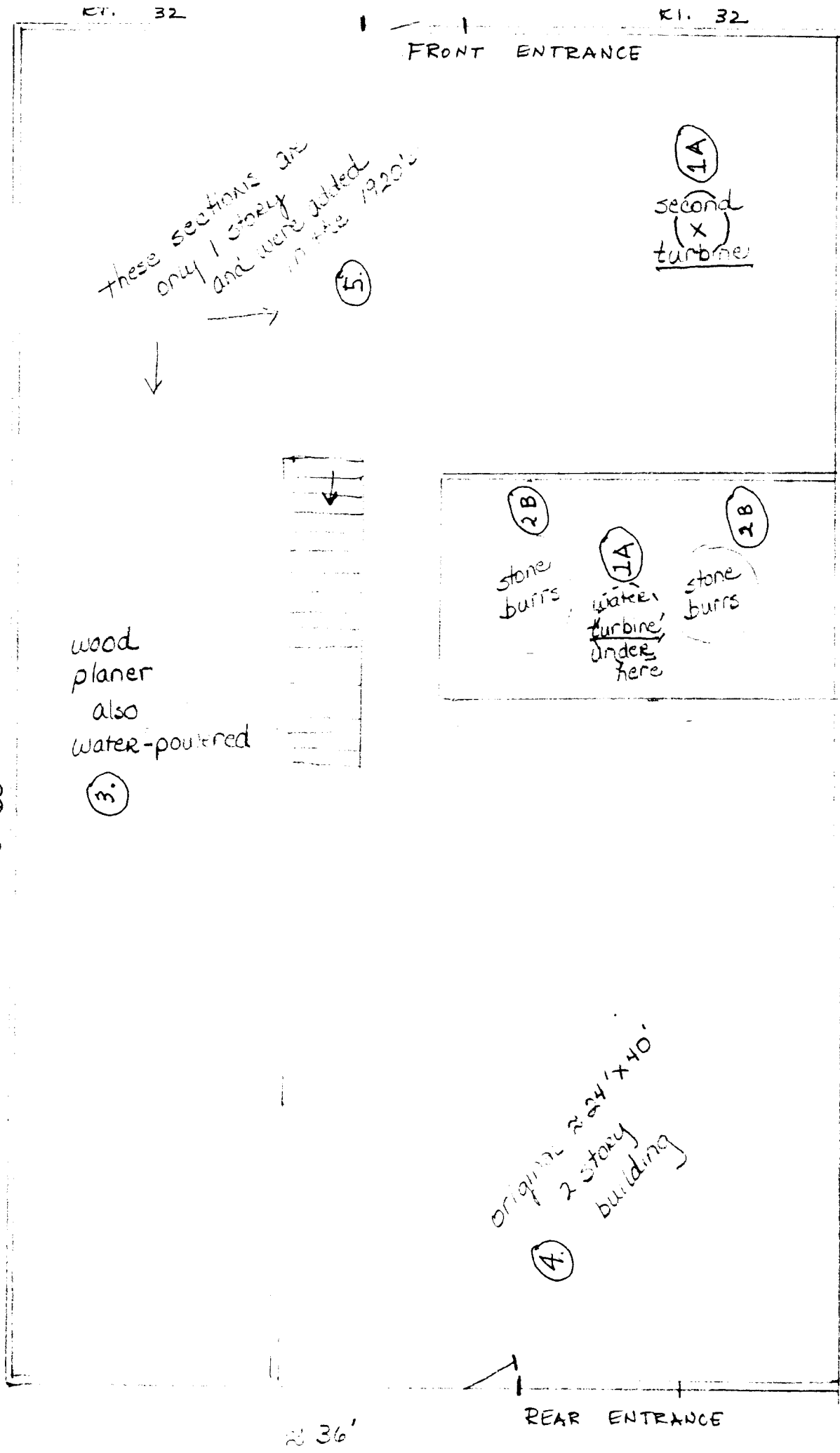
↓ HARMON, W.V.A.

PLAN

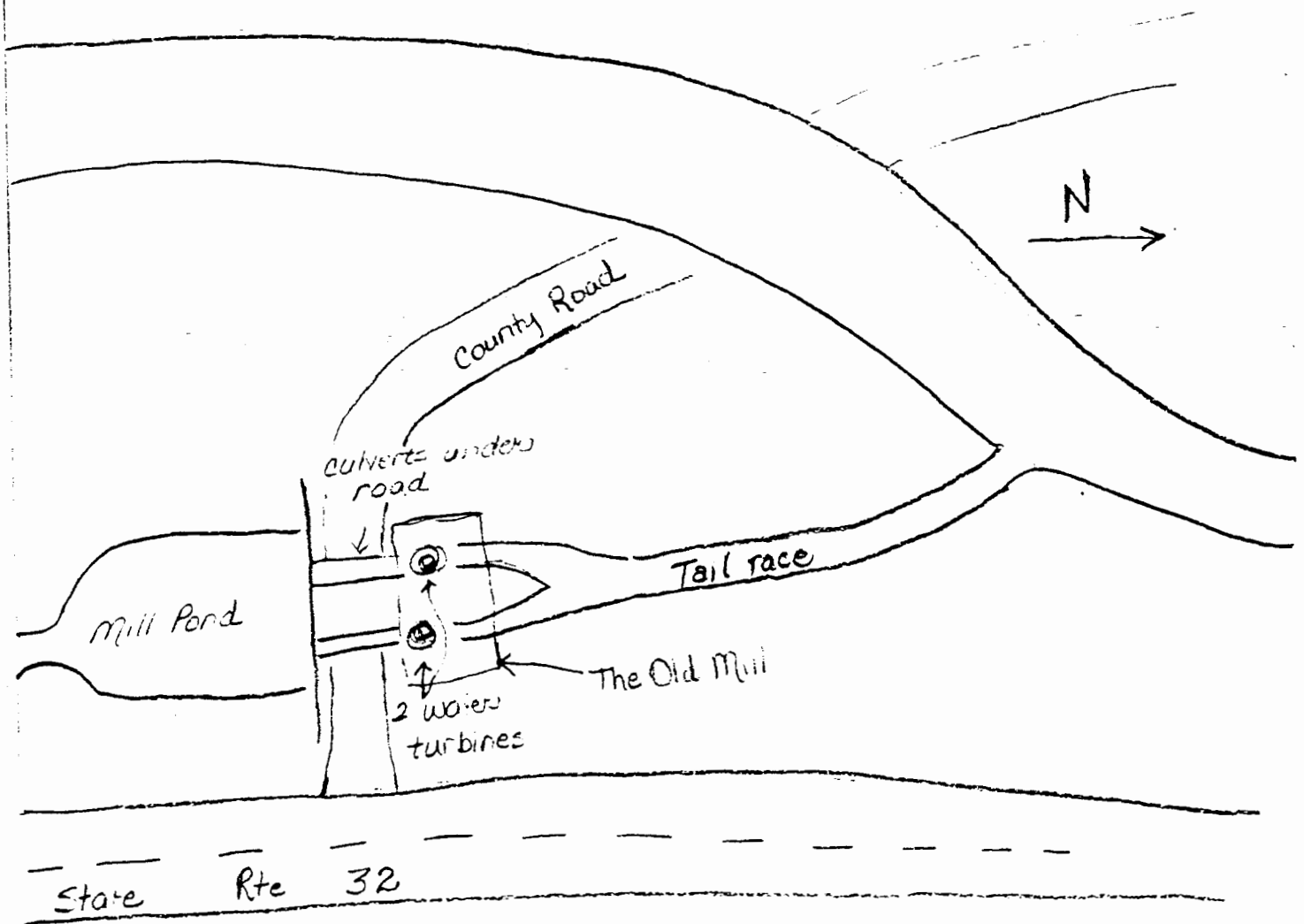
OLD MILL AT HARMON
HARMON, W.VA.

N ↑

- 1A = WATER TUBBINES
- 2B = STONE BURRS
- 3. = WOOD PLANER AREA
- 4. = ORIGINAL UNIT
- 5. = 1920'S SECTION



Map of water flow thru mill
(not to scale)





MOUNTAIN
INDUSTRIES
CRAFTS
The OLD MILL