

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED

7/30/80

**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

Breckinridge Mill (preferred)

AND/OR COMMON

Howell's Mill

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Route 600

\_\_NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Fincastle

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT  
Sixth (M. Caldwell Butler)

STATE

Virginia

CODE

51

COUNTY

Botetourt

CODE

023

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

**ACCESSIBLE**

**PRESENT USE**

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCES
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mr. Fred Taylor, Jr.

STREET & NUMBER

Route 2, Box 267A

CITY, TOWN

Fincastle

\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Virginia 24090

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Botetourt County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Fincastle

STATE

Virginia

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Survey

DATE

1973, 1980

\_\_FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission, 221 Governor Street

CITY, TOWN

Richmond

STATE

Virginia 23219

# 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 checked="" 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

Breckinridge Mill is located on Route 600 near Catawba Creek in Botetourt County. The gable-roofed, 3½-story brick structure was built ca. 1822 as a grist mill. In the present century the mill ceased operation and was used in connection with a chicken farm. The present owner acquired the property in 1977 and began conversion of the building into apartments. The deteriorated machinery was removed as the former mill underwent renovation for adaptive reuse.

The Flemish-bond edifice sits on a random-coursed limestone foundation. Traces of original painted joints appear on the west (main) elevation. Entrances are found on all elevations. No original doors have survived, and fenestration consists of replacement aluminum hung-sash windows. All openings are topped by brick jack arches. A rebuilt chimney stands at the northeast corner, and a corbeled cornice embellishes the eaves on the north and south elevations. An undershot iron mill wheel remains on the south elevation. The roof is covered with asbestos shingles.

The interior was extensively renovated when the building was adapted for use as apartments. While all mill machinery was removed, the original structural system was retained. Lamb's tongue chamfered posts support summer beams on all floors. Second- and third-floor joists remain exposed pending the conversion of the upper floors to apartments. An original closed-well stair on the south wall connects the first and second floors. A corner fireplace remains in the east apartment. A ladder still connects the second and third floors.

Two wood-frame, late 19th-century sheds survive in a poor state of repair immediately to the north of the mill.

RCC

## BOUNDARY JUSTIFICATION

The nominated property of 1/2 acre includes the mill and the area immediately surrounding it. It is a fraction of the original 3,000-acre tract owned by James Breckinridge, the mill owner.

# 18 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/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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES

1822

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Breckinridge Mill is an architecturally imposing remnant of the grain and milling industry that figured significantly in the economy of antebellum Virginia. The 3½-story brick structure was erected in 1822 for James Breckinridge, a leading politician and land-owner of southwestern Virginia, and is one of the oldest mills in the region. It replaced an earlier mill erected by Breckinridge in 1804. From Colonial times through the first half of the 19th century, the establishment of a grist mill was a major and costly project. Construction and operation required an investment of capital as well as engineering and mercantile skills. Breckinridge possessed both the capital and inventiveness to establish a substantial milling operation in Botetourt County. The settlement of the Valley frontier and the subsequent extension of the James River-Kanawha Canal to Botetourt County assured the success of this enterprise. Both the cause and the consequence of his prosperity, construction of the 1822 brick mill exemplified the many practical contributions of Breckinridge to commerce and politics in the Valley.

Born March 7, 1763, near Fincastle in Botetourt County, James Breckinridge served under General Greene in the successful campaign to rescue the Carolinas and Georgia from British power in 1781. After the Revolution, he studied law at William and Mary and commenced practice in 1787. Unlike his brother John, who removed to Kentucky and became a United States Senator and Attorney General in Jefferson's cabinet, James was a leader of the Federalist party in Virginia and resided in Botetourt County throughout his life. In the forefront of the Federalist effort in Virginia to defeat Jefferson's election in 1800, Breckinridge later served as the Federalist representative from the Middle Valley in the 11th-14th Congresses, 1809-1817. Although he rarely took part in public debate, his circular letters to his western constituents reveal him both as a harsh critic of Jeffersonian diplomacy and a responsible opponent of the War of 1812. Despite his opposition to the invasion of Canada, he served as commander of militia forces in southwestern Virginia until the peace of Ghent. Elected thirteen times from 1789-1824 to represent his county in the House of Delegates, he voted consistently with other westerners for improved roads, navigable rivers and more equitable representation in the Assembly. An early sponsor of the Virginia Fund for Internal Improvement, Breckinridge was also, as president of the bipartisan Staunton Convention of 1816, an important precursor of the Virginia Constitutional Convention of 1829-30. Upon retiring from Congress he was appointed to the first board of visitors of the University of Virginia.

A member of one of the earliest families of Botetourt County, the successful politician is first charged with eighty-two acres in 1790. By 1823 Breckinridge is charged with 3,000 acres, with improvements valued at \$12,600. A notation at this time explains the sum of \$2,600 as a new mill, the first reference to what is known today as Breckinridge Mill. Nearly twenty years before, Breckinridge had petitioned the county court to erect a dam for a new water grist mill. In 1804 the court clerk recorded that, "he owns the land on both sides of the creek whereon the said dam is erected, that in our opinion the health of the neighbors will not in any degree be annoyed by the stagnation of the water, and finally that the erection of said mill dam and water grist mill will be of considerable utility." Notwith-

(See Continuation Sheet #1)

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Botetourt County Deed Book 8, p. 232, p. 457.

Land Tax Books, 1782-1850.

Personal Property Tax Books, 1815, 1845.

Will Books E (1833), G (1844), L (1867).

Gilmer Map of Botetourt County, 1864.

Stoner, Robert D. Seed Bed of the Republic. Roanoke, Va., 1962, pp. 278-280.

Wood, John. Map of Botetourt County, 1821.

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1/2 acre

QUADRANGLE NAME Daleville, Va.

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 1, 7 | 5, 9, 6, 2, 6, 0 | 4, 1, 5, 0, 5, 4, 0

B    |    |   

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C    |    |   

D    |    |   

E    |    |   

F    |    |   

G    |    |   

H    |    |   

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION Beginning at a point on E side of Route 600, 800' W of Catawba Creek and 2600' NE of intersection of routes 600 and 670; thence extending about 100' E of W edge of private drive; thence about 150' S along said drive; thence about 175' WNW to E side of Route 600'; thence about 175' NE along said side to point of origin.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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## 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission Staff

ORGANIZATION

Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE

May 1980

STREET & NUMBER

221 Governor Street

TELEPHONE

(804) 736-3144

CITY OR TOWN

Richmond

STATE

Virginia 23219

## 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL   

STATE X

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 Tucker Hill, Executive Director  
Virginia Historic Landmarks Commission

DATE MAY 20 1980

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

ATTEST:

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

FHR-8-300A  
(11/78)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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## NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Breckinridge Mill, Botetourt County, Virginia

CONTINUATION SHEET #1

ITEM NUMBER 8

PAGE 1

### 8. SIGNIFICANCE

standing the disappearance of the 1804 mill, the building he erected on Catawba Creek in 1822 is significant to an understanding of early industry in the Valley.

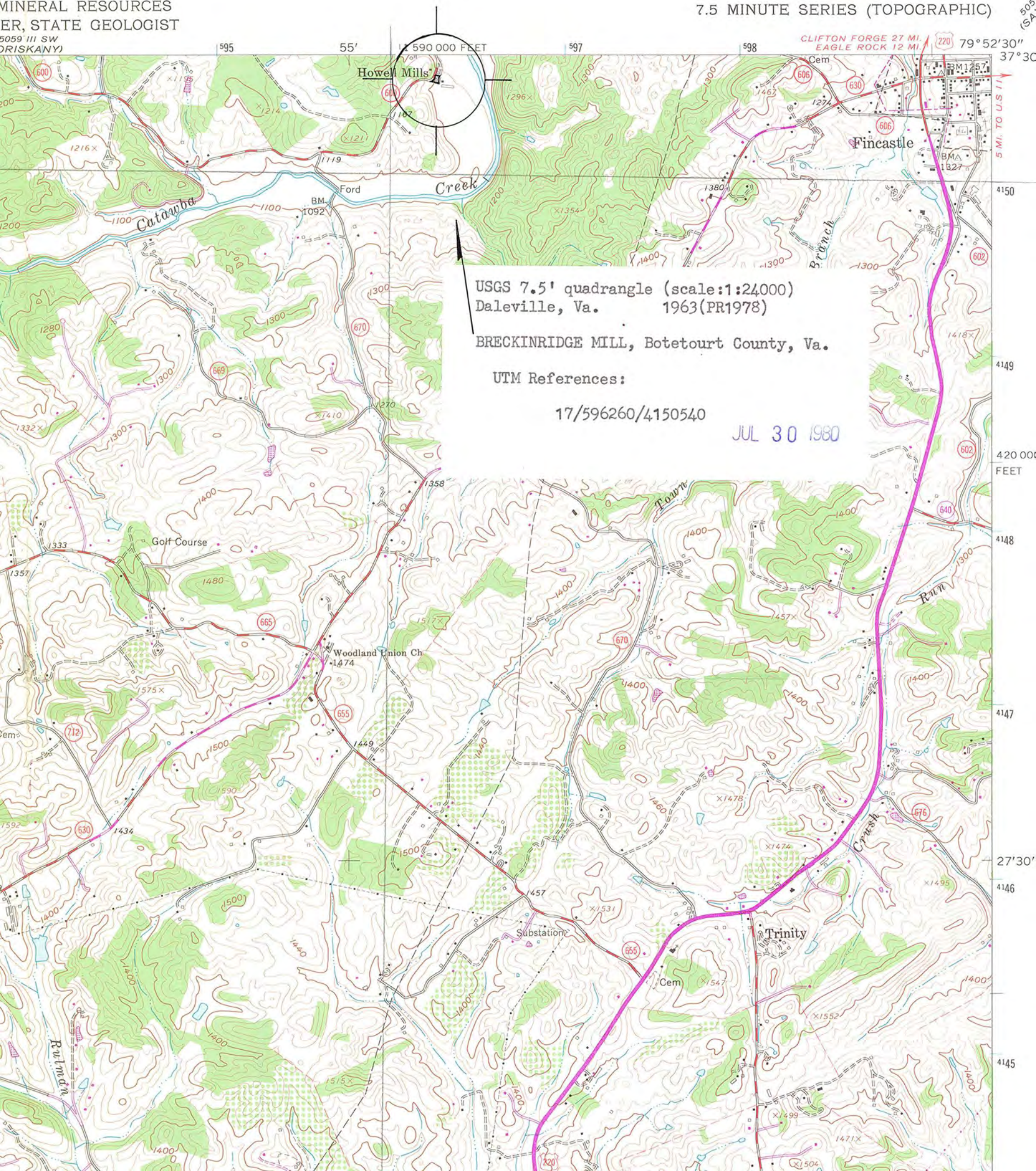
From the end of the 18th century, the Mid-Atlantic region was the direct beneficiary of the inventive genius of Oliver Evans whose Young Mill Wright's Guide appeared in 1795. The guide presented the machinery plans and elevations for mills, including grist mills, saw mills and ironworks. Evans's concepts found a fertile field in Botetourt County. Rich in natural resources, the county possessed abundant waterways from which hydraulic energy could be derived. For this reason the area was quick to develop a number of industries, with iron and grain the largest. In capitalizing on these advantages in the construction of his 1822 brick mill, Breckinridge thus gave practical embodiment to Evans's ideas.

Breckinridge died on May 13, 1833, a wealthy man. Numerous entries for payments of milling services in the settlement of his estate suggest that the milling operation provided him substantial income. The mill property ultimately passed to his sons, Cary and John. Entered in the county will book in 1867, Cary's will authorized the sale of the mill with ten to fifteen acres to pay off his debts. The property is presently owned by Fred Taylor, Jr., who has preserved the mill through adaptive reuse as apartments.

MTP/RCC

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<sup>1</sup>Botetourt County Deed Book 8, p. 457 (1804).



USGS 7.5' quadrangle (scale:1:24000)  
Daleville, Va. 1963(PR1978)

BRECKINRIDGE MILL, Botetourt County, Va.

UTM References:

17/596260/4150540

JUL 30 1980

5055  
(SA)

CLIFTON FORGE 27 MI.  
EAGLE ROCK 12 MI.  
79° 52' 30"

37° 30"

5 MI. TO U.S. II

4150

4149

42000  
FEET

4148

4147

27' 30"

4146

4145