

# Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

## 1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic SHIPLEY MILL AND MILL RACE

and/or common Same

## 2. Location

street & number 13027 Beaver Dam Road \_\_\_ not for publication

city, town Texas vicinity \_\_\_ vicinity of congressional district 2nd

state Maryland county Baltimore County

## 3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other:

## 4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Mr. Charles T. Kemp, III, et al.

street & number 4310 Mt. Carmel Road telephone no.: 374-4216

city, town Upperco state and zip code Maryland 21155

## 5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. County Courts Building liber 5614

street & number 401 Bosley Avenue folio 211

city, town Towson state Maryland 21204

## 6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Maryland Historical Trust Inventory

date On-going since 1965 \_\_\_ federal  state \_\_\_ county \_\_\_ local

depository for survey records 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

# 7. Description

Survey No. BA-976

? **Condition**  
 excellent     deteriorated     unaltered     original site  
 good     ruins     altered     moved    date of move    N/A  
 fair     unexposed

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

## SUMMARY

Shipleys Mill dated at 1791 by a surviving builder's stone is a rectangular structure of ordinary local stone that was converted into apartments in 1938. One of only two known 18th century mills in the county, it appears in numerous documents during its use as a mill and served as a working building of the Bishop goldfish ranch that flourished here from 1914 to 1941. The millrace is still discernible and some garden ornaments of the fish farm era also survive.

Shipley's Mill is stone, two stories high, with a high basement and an attic space, with a gabled roof. The mill is rectangular, without wings or projections, 30 by 34 feet. The date stone over the front door reads:

R  
J + E  
1791

The corners are partially quoined.

The alterations made in 1938 added a number of clustered windows and did away with the loading doors characteristic of mill architecture. A cluster of four casement windows was added to the main facade. An outside end-chimney of modern red brick rises on the north end, topped by a corbeled cap. The rear facade features an open rear porch of timber. The roof eaves overhang. Cable ends are filled in with clapboarding, providing two small windows on the chimney and to light the attic, and one large window on the south end. The stump of the original corner chimney appears at the NW corner of the mill. (1)

A large concrete forebay or holding pond banked with earth stands just east of the main (East) facade and provided an outlet to send water to the mill wheel, which was attached to the south end of the mill.

Northeast of the mill is a small structure with the date 1933 in art-deco numerals. There are two narrow doors side by side. This gable-roofed outbuilding is faced with orange, water-worn cobbles fitted into a mortar base. This structure was the privy for motorists visiting the fish ranch.

Between the privy and the mill is a grotto or fountain installation in the same whimsical style faced with small cobbles. A large marble slab shaped like a fish reads "Bishops Founded 1874."

Around the mill are low walls of orange stones and cobbles, resembling Munchkin Land architecture found in childrens' books.



# 9. Major Bibliographical References

Survey No. BA-976

John W. McGrain, Grist Mills of Baltimore County (Baltimore County Public Library, Towson, 1980).

Linwood Parks Shipley, We Shipleys (Summit, New Jersey: 1980). Privately Printed.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 142.7

Quadrangle name Cockeysville

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

UTM References do NOT complete UTM references

A	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

B	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
	Zone	Easting	Northing

C	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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D	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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E	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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F	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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G	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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H	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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## Verbal boundary description and justification

See Tax Map 51, Parcel P7

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

state	N/A	code	county	code
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state	N/A	code	county	code
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# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title John W. McGrain

organization Office of Planning and Zoning date May 16, 1986

street & number 401 Bosley Avenue telephone 494-3521

city or town Towson, Maryland state Maryland 21204

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.

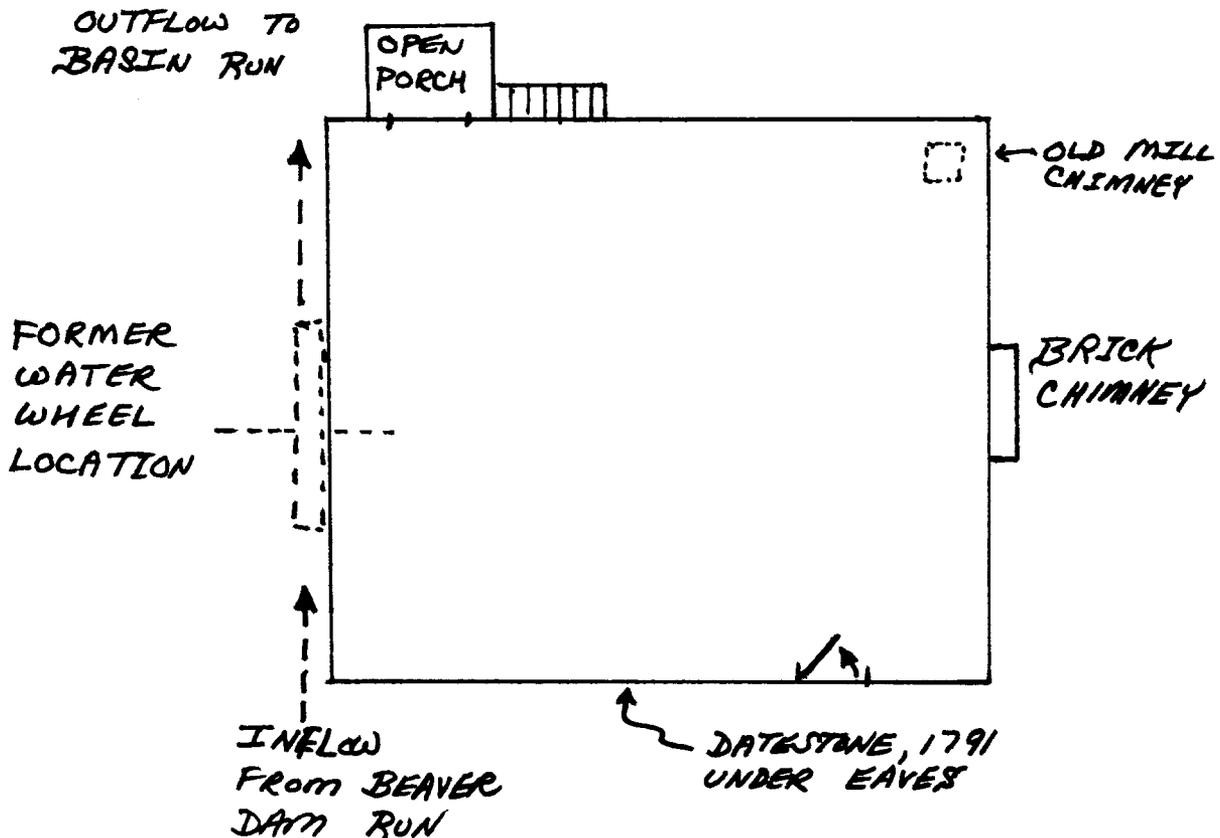
return to: Maryland Historical Trust  
Shaw House  
21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 269-2438

The millrace can be seen northeast of the mill, marked by earth banks, a depression, and a line of trees.

At one time, the ruins of another Shipley home, "John and Thomas forest," could be seen across a field north of the mill, but by 1986, woods had sprung up, and the ruin shown on the 1953 county photogrammetric map (200-scale) and in the book We Shipleys is lost to view in woods. (2)

NOTES:

1. Mills often had only one corner fireplace, designed to warm the miller's office; its chimney would run up the inside corner of the mill. This arrangement would leave the floor areas clear for machinery or storage bins.
2. L.P. Shipley, We Shipleys (Summit, N.J., 1980), p. 55. Photogrammetric map of Baltimore County, Cockeysville, Sheet N.W. 17C, April 1953. Revised 1970.



made two diary entries in his account book about buying "Boyd's Mill or Beaver Dam Mill." (9) Jessop's personal achievements are included with the statement on the Shipley-Kemp House (BA 975). He left this mill to his son-in-law Levi Merryman, whose house and mill are shown on both the 1950 county map by J.C. Sidney and the 1857 map by Robert W. Taylor.

Just north of the mill was the boundary line of another farm carved from the John and Thomas Forest survey owned by John Franklin Shipley.

In April 1859, J. F. Shipley bought the 150-acre Merryman farm from Levi Merryman's trustees, and in August the same year, sold all but the two-acre mill lot to his son Vincent T. Shipley. (10)

The mill was not advertised in 1859, but the 1860 census of manufactures valued it at \$500, listing one employee, and an annual output of 5,000 cwt of flour worth \$3,500. Raw material consumed was 10,000 bushels of wheat and corn. (11)

The mill apparently did a large business, with Shipley paying money for grain, as the plant was offered for sale in 1878 as a "merchant grist, and sawmill," with a "water right of the 'Beaver Dams.'" (12)

The 1880 census taker failed to find the mill, although it continued in business to the end of the century. The trustees who handled the family holdings recorded disbursements paid to Abraham Lohr in 1896 for repairing the wheel. (13) (Lohr was a professional millwright and miller whose name is occasionally found in letters to the trade journal American Miller.) (14)

In a mortgage proceeding of 1904, Robert F. Caples was described as occupant (i.e., tenant) of the mill. (15) The mill was advertised as "a four-story stone mill with splendid water power and water wright (sic)." (16) The Shipley heirs had inherited several farms, the mill, a general store building, tenant houses in the village of Texas, and a number of lime kilns. It was necessary to hold a public sale to distribute the assets. Harry V. Shipley was highest bidder for Oakland Farm and the mill. (17)

In the early part of the century, the mill was out of service and was apparently used as a wagon shed or garage. L. Parks Shipley in his family memoir recorded:

Lying between the old place and Oakland was a gristmill which, after John Shipley acquired the properties, became known as "Shipley's Mill." In the old deeds it was called "Black Rock Mill," but this name seems to have disappeared completely. John operated the grist mill for many years and it continued to produce meal from its big grinding stones for John's son and grandson almost down to my father's day.

An interesting tale about this mill was that someone in the dim past had been crushed to death in the great millstones

and that henceforth the building was "haunted." As a young boy I was told that dogs would raise their hackles and refuse to go into the building. Grandfather Shipley told me this quite seriously but I am not sure he believed it. As a kid I used to wander through the mill quite fearlessly, and I remember well the big mosscovered water wheel which was powered by a mill race that zigzagged across the field and carried water from the Baisman Branch a quarter mile or so north of the mill.

The mill building still stands and its picturesque exterior is not much changed by the fact that it had been converted to "flats". It is a real landmark of the county. A few years ago as I was rambling about the old place. I struck up a conversation with a young man who lived in one of the mill apartments. I asked him whether he was much troubled by ghosts and told him the story. He said he had not noticed any untoward phenomena.

(18)

The road now called Beaver Dam Road was referred to in some deeds as the road to Black Rock Mill; however, its destination via the present Cuba Road, could well have been Richard Johns' Black Road Mill on Falls Road near the village of Butler. (19)

In 1914, Harry V. Shipley sold to Henry Bishop of Baltimore, owner of a pet-supply store. (20) The county weekly soon reported on the "Fish Ranch at Beaver Dam" where a "gang of twelve Italians" was building 30 acres of pond, repairing the race, and installing in the mill machinery for the manufacture of fish food." (21) "Bishop the Bird-Seed Man" was described in his newspaper obituary as having shipped a million goldfish per year at the peak of the operation. (22)

Mrs. Evelyn Bishop Fisher, granddaughter of the founder, recalled in 1983 that when her family acquired the place, the waterwheel was already gone and part of the south-end of the mill had been pulled out to install turbines, a project never completed. Her uncle, Charles Bishop, rebuilt the wall with the help of the pond laborers. The mill windows still had primitive solid wooden shutters and some machinery is survived inside in 1914. The mill race led from Balsman's Run or Branch, and after the water was used to power the mill, it was sent down the tailrace to Beaver Dam Run, thence to the quarry.

The ponds for the fish were built by mule teams that dragged scoops over the ground. The retaining walls were earth, wide at the bottom, narrow at the top. On one occasion, a storm washed out one of the ponds and a lot of goldfish escaped to propagate downstream.

Some years after making their own repairs, the Bishops engaged an architect to look at the mill and he reported that its walls had only sunken about an inch. (23)

The earliest known photo of the mill appeared in the rotogravure supplement of the Sunday papers in 1931 when it was "still stood firm against the weather" and resembled a typical mill. (24)

Motorists used to come out in large numbers on Sundays and the twin privy built in 1933 was designed to meet an unexpected need of the automobile age. With the 60 acres of ponds and the garden walls in Munchkin Land architecture, and the fountains, it must have seemed like a minor Tivoli to the owners of Model-T cars.

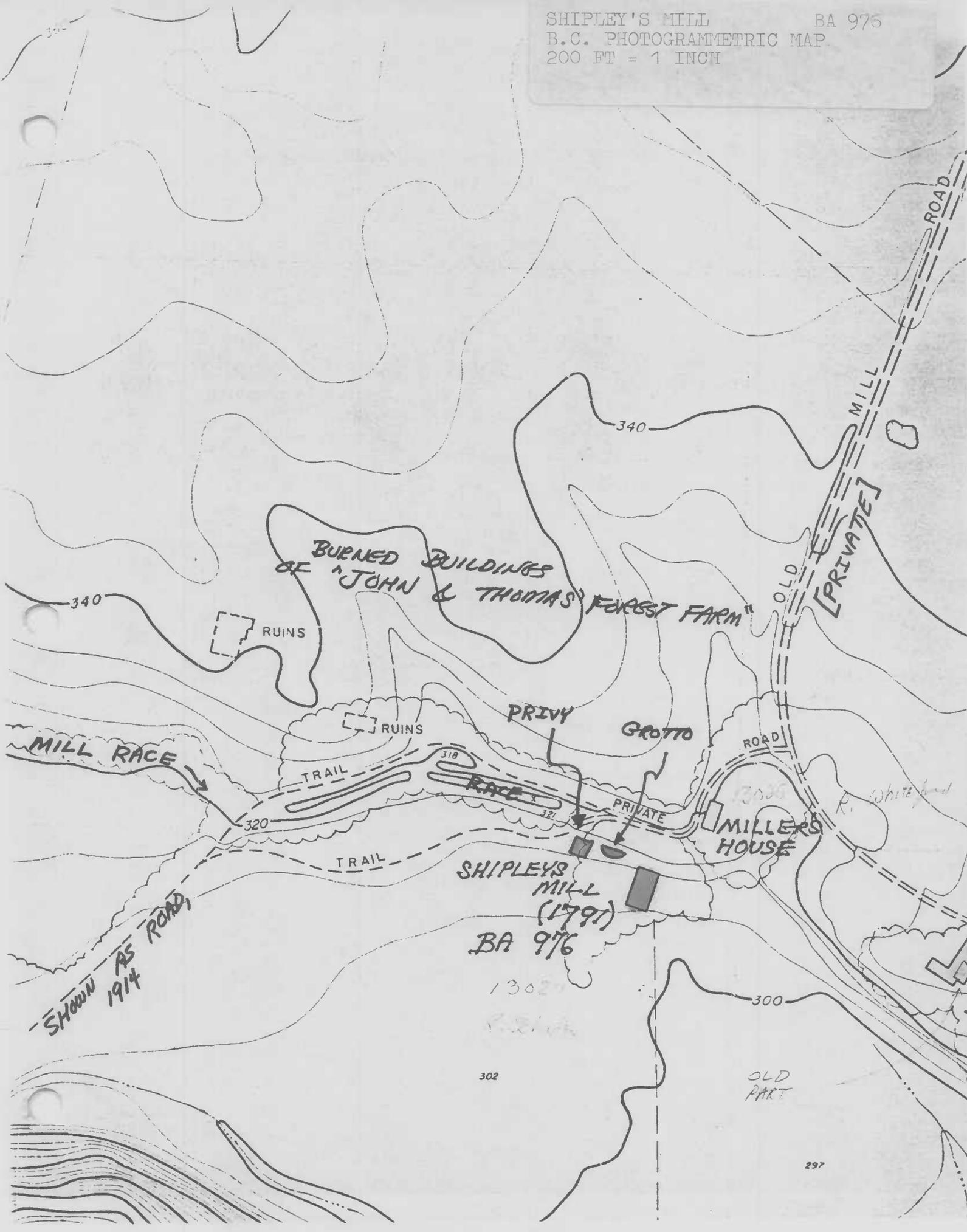
When Henry Bishop, Jr. acquired the mill in 1937, he and his daughter, Evelyn A. Bishop (later Mrs. Fisher) had it remodeled into its present form as a residence, in which configuration it continues to 1986. (25) In 1941, Charles T. Kemp, the Bishop's restoration contractor brought suit and subsequently became owner. (26) Mrs. Betsy Kemp in 1972 permitted the author to take the photos later used in the book on County gristmills. (27)

NOTES:

1. Baltimore County Deeds, WG No. EE, f. 236 (Hall of Records, Annapolis). Date stone observed May 15, 1986.
2. Federal Direct Assessment, Back River Upper Hundred, 1798, Entry No. 1145 (Microfilm owned by OPZ).
3. Baltimore City Deeds, WG 78:36.
4. Baltimore Federal Gazette, February 5, 1808.
5. Baltimore American, July 2, 1821.
6. Tax List, Old District 2 (1823), n.p. (Hall of Records).
7. Baltimore American, May 16, 1825.
8. Baltimore City Deeds, WG 186:402.
9. Baltimore City Deeds, WG 186:406.
10. Baltimore County Deeds, GHC 25:236.
11. Manufacturers Census of Maryland, Baltimore County, 1860 (Microfilm in State Library, Annapolis).
12. Baltimore Sun, March 30, 1878, Supplement, p. 2.
13. Baltimore County Judicial Records, WPC 204:238.
14. American Miller, 12 (June 1, 1884): 318.
15. Baltimore County Judicial Records, WPC 185:580.
16. Baltimore County Judicial Records, WPC 204:282.
17. B.C. Deeds, WPC 296:495.
18. L. Parks Shipley, We Shipleys (Summit, N.J., 1980), p. 33.

NOTES contd.

19. B.C. Deeds, CWB JR. 1150:450.
20. B.C. Deeds, WPC 430:152.
21. Union News, Towson, July 25, 1914.
22. Baltimore Sun, October 5, 1937.
23. Evelyn Bishop Fisher to John McGrain, interview County Courts Building, Towson, October 1983.
24. Sunday Sun, July 19, 1931.
25. "Bishops Remodeling 147-Year-Old Grist Mill At Cockeysville Into Interesting Residence," Jeffersonian, June 3, 1938.
26. B.C. Deeds, CWB JR. 1150:453.
27. John W. McGrain, Grist Mills of Baltimore County (Towson, 1980), p. 19.



SHIPLEY'S MILL BA 976  
U.S.G.S. 7.5 MINUTE QUAD  
COCKEYSVILLE, MD





SHIPLEY'S MILL BA 976  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
J. McGrain, May, 1986  
Neg. located at OPZ, Towson  
Rear or south facade



SHIPLEY'S MILL                      BA 976  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
J. McGrain, May, 1986  
Neg. located at OPZ, Towson  
Front or North facade



SHIPLEY'S MILL: GROTTO BA 976  
Baltimore County, Maryland  
J. McGrain, May, 1986  
Neg. located at OPZ, Towson  
Marble plaque of fish farm