

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

VLR
8-15-89
NRHP
12-6-1990

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Property

historic name _____
other names/site number COCKE'S MILL HOUSE AND MILL SITE
Coles' Mill, Johnston's Mill

2. Location

street & number Route 712, north side N/A not for publication
city, town _____
state Virginia code VA county Albemarle code 003 zip code 22959

3. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	Contributing	Noncontributing
<input type="checkbox"/> public-local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
		<u>2</u>	<u>0</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing: NA Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register NA

4. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Heidi C. Mutter 1 Nov 1990
Signature of certifying official Date
Director, Virginia Department of Historic Resources
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. See continuation sheet.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register.
 See continuation sheet.

determined eligible for the National Register. See continuation sheet.

determined not eligible for the National Register.

removed from the National Register.

other, (explain:)

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

Domestic; single dwelling (miller's hse.)
Industry; manufacturing facility (mill)

Domestic; single dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

Colonial

foundation Stone
walls Stone; frame (addition)
roof Wood-shake; stone-slate
other

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

SUMMARY ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

The Miller's House and the ruins of Cocke's Mill are located on a thirteen-acre tract on the north side of Route 712 overlooking the Hardware River in southern Albemarle County. The Miller's House (built circa 1820 with an addition in 1989) is a one-and-one-half-story, three-bay, gable-roofed stone cottage built on a high basement. There is an entrance to the basement level on the south facade and an entrance to the addition on the first story of the north facade as well as a Dutch door leading to a small balcony on the south facade. The interior of the stone house features two rooms on the first and second floors connected by a boxed staircase. Floors, baseboard trim, paneled doors and simple Federal period mantles are original. The basement contains the kitchen and has retained its original beaded beams. A one-story frame wing, completed in 1989 contains a bath, laundry room, entry hall and screened porch. It is built on a stone foundation and has a slate roof. Directly to the southeast are the stone foundations of Cocke's Mill (built circa 1792) originally two stories high with dimensions of fifty one feet by forty feet, and the stone walls of the original mill and tail race, both in good condition.

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION:

Cocke's Mill House and the site of Cocke's Mill are located on a thirteen-acre tract on the north side of Route 712, halfway between the villages of Keene and North Garden in southern Albemarle County. The land, which is heavily forested, rises steeply from the north side of the road and the house is built into the south side of a high embankment. This embankment is reinforced by a five-foot-high stone wall a few feet south of the house. The house faces directly on both the road and the Hardware River, which parallels the road to the south. The setting is overwhelmingly rural.

The Mill House (built circa 1820 with an addition in 1989) is a three-bay one-story house built on a high basement with a framed, gable-roofed attic story. Uncut fieldstone is used except for large squared stones that are used at the corners. The stones have been whitewashed except where a Victorian era

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

nationally statewide locally

Applicable National Register Criteria A B C D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) A B C D E F G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

ARCHITECTURE
INDUSTRY

Period of Significance

ca. 1820s-1930s
ca. 1820s-1930s

Significant Dates

Cultural Affiliation

NA

Significant Person

NA

Architect/Builder

UNKNOWN

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE:

Cocke's Mill House and Mill Site are significant as a rare partially surviving mill complex and a reminder of the importance of the flour milling industry in Albemarle County. The house is one of only a handful of original miller's residences and one of only two built of stone still standing in the county. Architecturally, it is therefore also significant as a well-preserved, early nineteenth century stone residence in an area of Virginia in which nearly all residences were either brick or frame.

The production of flour was once the most important industry in the county and at one time there were more than sixty mills in operation. Milling declined rapidly after World War I and the physical evidence of most of these thriving mill complexes has disappeared. Although most of Cocke's gristmill is no longer standing, its stone foundations, dam, millrace and cut stone arches remain to give an indication of the scale of its operation and the sophistication of its construction.

HISTORY:

Cocke's Mill and the adjoining miller's house stand on part of a sixteen-hundred acre grant to Mildred Meriweather in 1741. The land eventually passed to the Nelson family and in 1787 Robert Nelson sold it to James Powell Cocke (1748-1829), a native of Malvern Hills in Henrico County, who was forced by ill health to move first to Spring Hill in Augusta County and then to Albemarle County. 2 A relative of John Hartwell Cocke of Brems, James Powell Cocke was also a friend and correspondent of Thomas Jefferson's who wrote him once in thanks for fish sent to stock his pond at Monticello. 3 It is almost certain that Jefferson also designed Cocke's house, Edgemont, built around 1797. It is one of only four houses designed by Jefferson in Albemarle County and the only one of frame construction. The plan of the completed house is shown in the records of a fire insurance policy taken out by Cocke in 1799. 4

9. Major Bibliographical References

Albemarle County Land Records, Charlottesville, Virginia
Albemarle County Order Books, Charlottesville, Virginia
Mutual Assurance Company of Virginia, Fire Insurance Policies, Special Collections,
Alderman Library, University of Virginia, Charlottesville, Virginia.
Page, Marian, Historic Houses Restored and Preserved, (New York: Whitney Library of Design 1976.
Southall, James P. C., "Malvern Hills, Henrico County and Edgemont, Albemarle County-- Homes of James Powell Cocke" , Virginia Magazine of History and Biography, volume 43 (1935)
United States Bureau of the Census, United States Census of Manufacturers, Fredericksville Parish Virginia (1820), National Archives, Washington, D.C.

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
- previously listed in the National Register
- previously determined eligible by the National Register
- designated a National Historic Landmark
- recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

See continuation sheet

Primary location of additional data:

- State historic preservation office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Specify repository:

Virginia Division of Historic Landmark
221 Governor Street, Richmond 23219

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property Approximately 13 acres

UTM References

A 17 709450 419810
Zone Easting Northing

C 17 709640 419740
Zone Easting Northing

B 17 709680 419810
Zone Easting Northing

D 17 709390 419860
Zone Easting Northing

See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description

The boundary of the nominated property is delineated by the polygon whose vertices are marked by the following UTM reference pointes: A 17/709450/419810, B 17/709680/4198100, C 17/709640/4197940, D 17/709390/4198060.

See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification

The nominated boundaries incorporate the two historic resources, (Cocke's Mill House and Mill Site) as well as the mill race and culvert. The boundaries retain the mill's historic relationship to Route 712 and the Hardware River.

See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Geoffrey Henry

organization _____ date _____

street & number 1515 Rutledge Avenue telephone 804-293-8006

city or town Charlottesville state Va. zip code 22903

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frame wing (now removed) was attached. A massive exposed stone chimney rises from the west facade; there is also a smaller (and later) chimney on the east facade. The house is in good condition.

The house is trimmed with an original boxed cornice and simple molding strips on the north and south facades. The beaded weatherboarding on the two gable ends of the attic are also original. During the removal of the north wing, the original cedar shakes on the lower two thirds of the roof were uncovered; most are in good condition. The rest of the roof has long been covered with slate shingles.

The house features twelve-over-nine sash windows on the first story and smaller six-pane casement windows on the basement level. The window frames are pegged and have simple molded architrave trim and beaded sills. On the attic story there are two four-pane casement windows on the west gable end and a larger four-over-four double-hung sash window on the east. There are no windows on the north facade of the stone house. Nearly all of the windows have retained their original sash and window panes.

There is a door in the center bay on the basement level and on the first-story north facade, as well as a Dutch door on the first-story south facade. The latter leads out to a small metal balcony.

The interior consists of two rooms of unequal size on the first and second floors and one large room in the basement. The eighteen-inch-thick stone walls are whitewashed and partition walls plastered, although some vertical-board paneling is evident around the boxed staircase and on the second floor. The two rooms on the first floor retain their original floors, door and window moldings, beaded baseboard trim and portions of chairrail molding. There is a simple Federal period mantel in the west room.

The first and second floors are connected by a narrow boxed winder stair. A recent (1989) winder stair connects the basement to the first floor. The second floor also retains much of its original woodwork, although there is no mantel. A bathroom and closet were inserted next to the stairway on the second floor during the 1989 alterations.

The Victorian-era wing on the north was replaced in 1989 by a one-story frame wing built on stone foundations and covered with weatherboard siding. This wing contains an entry hall flanked by a screened porch on the west and a laundry room, bath, and closet on the east. The porch and entry hall have slate floors. The hipped roof is covered with slate shingles.

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The six-to seven-foot-high stone walls of the original millrace begin thirty feet to the east of the mill house. The race runs approximately one hundred feet to the east until it reaches the stone foundations of the old mill. These foundations, which measure fifty-one by forty feet, are all that remain of the three-story frame merchant gristmill built to serve the Edgemont plantation of James Powell Cocke in 1792. Cut stone semicircular arches pierce the foundations at the north and south ends and are also seen at the south end of the culvert that carried the water underneath the road to the river. Although the millrace and foundations are overgrown with vegetation, they are in good condition and illustrate the craftsmanship typically expended on stone construction in the eighteenth century.

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On July 12, 1792, Cocke petitioned the Albemarle County Court "for leave to build a water grist mill on the South Branch of the Hardware River." 5 This mill, along with another mill built but no longer standing, were part of his Edgemont plantation. At the request of a neighboring landowner, a jury was impaneled to determine the adverse affects, if any, the mill would have on surrounding landowners. The jury found only minimal inconveniences and awarded only token damages to the affected neighbors; in fact, it declared that "said mill when finished will be of public utility." 6

To provide access to the towns of Charlottesville and Scottsville, Cocke further petitioned the Court on December 12, 1793 to reroute a road to run between his mill and Scott's ferry (now Scottsville) to the south. The court, again acting on the recommendation of a jury, declared that the new way may be made equally if not better than the old way, the distance nearly the same and on the motion of the said Cocke the road is established on his building a Bridge over his Canal [mill race]." 7

Further information on the date of the mill is provided by fire insurance policies taken out by Cocke in 1799, 1805 and 1816. 8 The 1799 policy issued by the Mutual Fire Assurance Company and signed by Cocke, "residing at Hardware Mills" described a "stone merchant mill 51 feet by 40 feet, three stories high covered with wood." In 1805 the mill was valued at \$5500 for fire insurance purposes while the Edgemont house was valued at \$4500. 9

Although the references to the mill in the court and insurance records provide evidence for a date of circa 1792 for the grist mill, the date for the miller's house is more problematic. Architectural evidence indicates a date of construction some time after 1820. Indeed, the fact that it is not described in any of the aforementioned insurance records suggests that it could not have been built until at least 1816.

Grist mills such as Cocke's were once a common part of the agricultural landscape. Many planters operated mills in connection with their farms in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; the first official reference to a mill was recorded in Albemarle County in 1741. Their numbers proliferated as the agricultural economy shifted from tobacco to wheat and corn. In the 1820 Census of Manufacturers eleven flour mills were recorded in Frederickville parish alone, which covered the northern and western half of the county. 10 By this time, most of the mills were merchant mills, in which the miller bought the farmers' grain and then sold the flour to the general public,

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rather than retaining a percentage of the grain as had been the practice earlier. The efficiency of milling was also enhanced by the introduction in 1787 of a revolutionary mill design based on the theories of Oliver Evans of Delaware. His designs, which relied on a series of chutes and pulleys to create a fully automated mill, greatly increased their productivity and profitability. By 1875 there were more than sixty mills in operation in Albemarle County, of which most, if not all were of the Evans design.¹⁰

Only a handful of these mill complexes are still standing in Albemarle County making a comparison with Cocke's Mill difficult at best. The Warren Mill (ca. 1820s; 1858) near Warren; the Hatton Grange Mill (ca.1868) near the Hatton Ferry; and the Jefferson Mill, now a private residence near Scottsville are the best preserved of these early mills, but the ruins of a half dozen or more mills are still visible in the county. Like Cocke's Mill, they were built on large stone foundations and employed heavy timber frame construction. Some early mill houses have also been preserved at Walker's Mill near Gordonsville, Harris' Mill, Dyer's Mill (ca.1796) at Glendower, and Cochran's Mill in Charlottesville. The latter mill house, reputedly built in 1754 but probably half a century later in date, is the only other stone miller's house still standing. Both Cocke's Mill House and Cochran's Mill House feature a high basement, a two-room plan on each floor, and Federal period woodwork. Cocke's Mill was known as Johnston's Mill after 1880.

Flour milling declined rapidly after the turn of the century in Virginia, as did elsewhere on most of the Eastern seaboard. The introduction of electricity and roller mills moved the center of the industry to the upper Midwest. There grist mills were able to produce flour and meal at a fraction of the cost of the older water-powered mills. Many of these mills suffered damage from floods or fire or were simply abandoned. After the Johnston mill closed in the 1930s, it too deteriorated and probably burned in the 1940s. The mill house was occupied as a residence by a number of different owners until bought and renovated by the present owner in 1988-1989. Still extant are complete ledger books kept by the Johnston firm in the 1880s and 1890s which guided the renovation efforts.

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References :

- 1 Southall, "Malvern Hills... Homes of James Powell Cocke", page 87.
- 2 Page, Historic Houses, p. 101.
- 3 Mutual Assurance Company policies, Number 349, Reel 2, Volume 13, (1799).
- 4 *ibid.*
- 5 Albemarle County Order Books, 1791-1793, page 203.
- 6 *ibid.* , 1794-1796, page 126.
- 7 *ibid.* , 1794-1796, page 5.
- 8 For the 1799 policy, see Number 349, Reel 2, Volume 13; for the 1805 policy, see Number 47, Reel 4, Volume 36; for the 1816 policy see Number 2276, Reel 5 Volume 45.
- 9 *ibid.*
- 10 Census of Manufacturers (1820) Fredericksville, Parish, Virginia
- 11 1875 Peyton Map of Albemarle County, reprinted 1988 by the Albemarle County Historical Society, Charlottesville, Virginia.

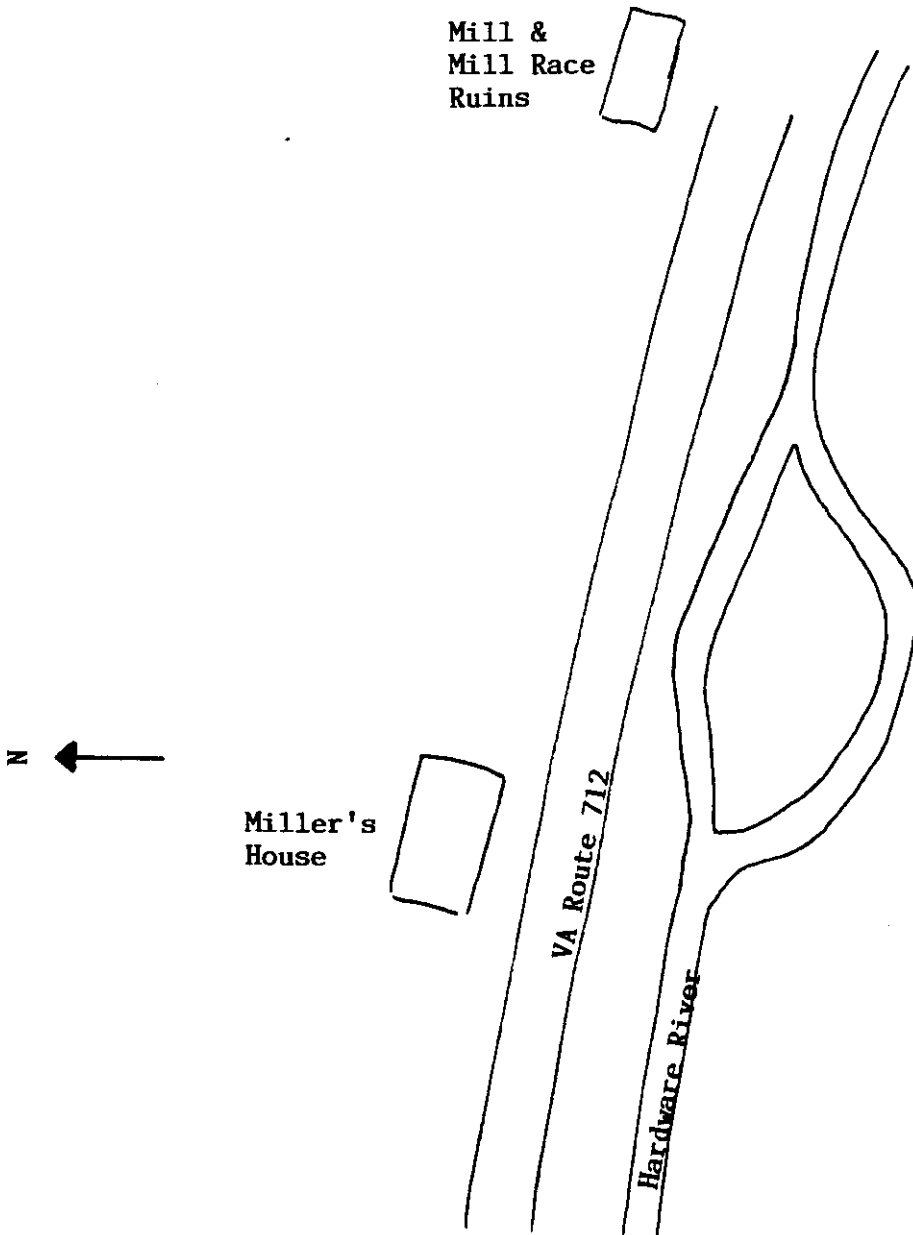
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SKETCH MAP

COCKE'S MILL, ALBEMARLE COUNTY, VIRGINIA

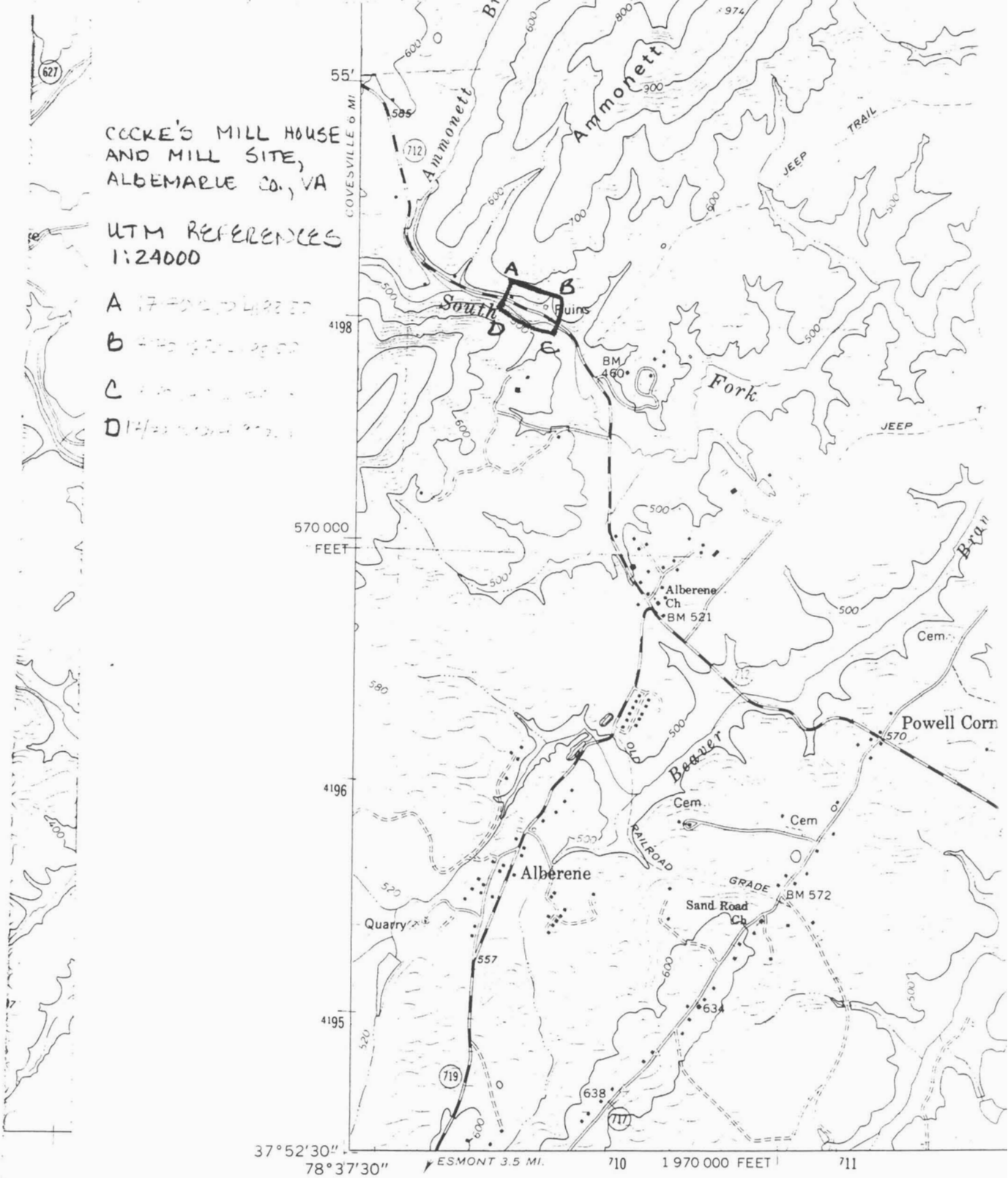


NOT TO SCALE

COCKE'S MILL HOUSE
AND MILL SITE,
ALBEMARLE CO., VA

UTM REFERENCES
1:24000

- A 17-50-00-00-00
- B 17-50-00-00-00
- C 17-50-00-00-00
- D 17-50-00-00-00



(SCHUYLER)
5259 | SW

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey

Control by USGS and NOS/NOAA

Topography by photogrammetric methods from aerial photographs taken 1964 and 1965. Field checked 1967

Polyconic projection. 10,000-foot grid based on Virginia coordinate system, south zone. 1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks, zone 17, shown in blue. 1927 North American Datum To place on the predicted North American Datum 1983 move the projection lines 10 meters south and 23 meters west as shown by dashed corner ticks

Fine red dashed lines indicate fence and field lines where generally visible on aerial photographs. This information is unchecked

Revisions shown in purple compiled in cooperation with Commonwealth of Virginia agencies from aerial photographs taken 1979 and other source data This information not field checked. Map edit 1/1988

UTM GRID
DECLINAT