

VLR 9/14/15
NRHP 11/16/15

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM**

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Brookside Farm & Mill

other names/site number M. B. Cox House, Cox and Phipps Mill, Saddle Creek Mill, 038-0009

2. Location

street & number 4161 Wilson Highway not for publication N/A
city or town Independence vicinity X
state Virginia code VA county Grayson code 077 Zip 24348

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

[Signature] Signature of certifying official Date 9/25/15
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 for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. 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): _____

Signature of Keeper

Date of Action

U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Brookside Farm & Mill
Grayson County, Virginia

5. Classification

Ownership of Property (Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property (Check only one box)

- building(s)
- district
- site
- structure
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u>10</u>	<u>0</u>	buildings
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	sites
<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>	structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	objects
<u>12</u>	<u>1</u>	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing (Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

N/A

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>domestic</u>	Sub: <u>single dwelling</u>
<u>domestic</u>	<u>secondary structure</u>
<u>industry/processing</u>	<u>grist/flour mill</u>
<u>commerce/transportation</u>	<u>road-related</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Current Functions (Enter categories from instructions)

Cat: <u>domestic</u>	Sub: <u>single dwelling</u>
<u>domestic</u>	<u>secondary structure</u>
<u>vacant</u>	<u>not in use</u>
<u>other</u>	<u>storage</u>
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Brookside Farm & Mill
Grayson County, Virginia

7. Description

Architectural Classification (Enter categories from instructions)

Other: Late 19th-century vernacular

Materials (Enter categories from instructions)

foundation stone, concrete
roof metal, asphalt
walls wood, brick

other _____

Narrative Description (Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria (Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations (Mark "X" in all the boxes that apply.)

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

U. S. Department of the Interior
National Park Service

Brookside Farm & Mill
Grayson County, Virginia

Areas of Significance (Enter categories from instructions)

Agriculture, Commerce, Industry, Engineering, Architecture, Transportation

Period of Significance 1876-1955

Significant Dates 1876

1877

1918

Significant Person (Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

N/A

Cultural Affiliation N/A

Architect/Builder Robert Landreth; Samuel M. Fulton; F.M. Cox

Narrative Statement of Significance (Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

State Historic Preservation Office

Other State agency

Federal agency

Local government

University

Other

Name of repository: _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property approximately 447 acres

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

Zone Easting Northing Zone Easting Northing

1 17 479417 4053181 2 17 479441 4051542

3 17 479985 4051476 4 17 480510 4052884

x See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Michael J. Pulice, Architectural Historian

Organization: Virginia Department of Historic Resources date September 2005

street & number: 1030 Penmar Ave, SE telephone 540-857-7586

city or town Roanoke state VA zip code 24013

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

A sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative black and white photographs of the property.

Additional items (Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name/title: Dr. & Mrs. James M. Cox

street & number: 4161 Wilson Highway telephone 276-773-2036

city or town Independence state VA zip code 24348

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Brookside Farm & Mill
Grayson County, Virginia

Section 7 Page 1

7. Summary Description:

The Brookside Farm & Mill is located on Saddle Creek in Grayson County, Virginia, on the south side of U.S. Highway 58, also known as Wilson Highway, and more recently as the A. L. Philpott Highway. The property is approximately 4 miles west of the county seat of Independence, about one mile east of the Bridle Creek community. The 447-acre, mostly-wooded property includes a domestic complex consisting of a two-story, frame, center-passage-plan house built in the mid-1870s, augmented by contemporary outbuildings including a brick springhouse, a brick meathouse, and a saddle-notched, drive-through, log corn crib. Also within the domestic complex is a ca.1910-12 shed-roofed, frame henhouse, and c.1955 concrete block gambrel-roofed barn/garage. The 1876 timber-frame mill, ca.1880 miller's cabin and 1914 concrete dam are located south of the house, and are reached by a ford downstream and a concrete culvert across the earthen millrace. Southwest of the house, on a southerly bend in the old Grayson County Turnpike roadbed, is a frame automotive service station/garage, built in 1918. Further west is a one-story, frame, Miller's cottage called the Graham House, built ca.1900.

Narrative Description

Until 1932-3, when the paved US Highway 58, then called the J.E.B. Stuart Highway, was built bypassing the house, farm and mill, the house sat immediately adjacent to the old Grayson County Turnpike, which was the main east-west transportation route in the county. The section of old roadbed traversing the property is today used by the Cox family as a driveway.

The principal dwelling on the property, constructed in 1877, is a two-story, three-bay, central-passage-plan frame building with a shallow integral extension to the rear, in which there are smaller rooms flanking a passage. The house is characterized by a low, two-story porch with square posts and square baluster railings across the entire front. The structural system is essentially a balloon frame with brick nogging (infill) between uprights. The building measures 46' by 36' including its integral porch; (porch depth is 8' 4"), and has handmade brick exterior end chimneys, 6 ½-feet wide at the base and 37 feet tall, with corbelled tops and the appearance of Flemish bond joints penciled over five-course American bond. The house also has curved, exposed rafter ends; coursed rubble foundation; six-over-six sash windows; an asphalt-shingled side-gable roof, and central five-panel door with sidelights on each floor of the principal facade.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Brookside Farm & Mill
Grayson County, Virginia

Section 7 Page 2

Under the front porch is a full-length stone cellar with outside doors at both ends. The cellar is also accessed from the first floor hallway. The house is built into a bank so that the basement level has full windows on the rear and ends, and contains the original kitchen and dining room. The first floor has a parlor at the west end with exposed, unbeaded ceiling joists measuring 2 ½" by 8". The east room has plain board ceilings and walls, as does the entire second floor. The first and second floors have two rooms on each side of the hall; the third floor has only one room on each side. Behind the finished third floor rooms is an unfinished attic space that runs the length of the building. It is accessed from the hall and has windows in each gable end. The passage on each of the three floors is 9-feet wide and contains an open-stringer stair with two square balusters per step and a molded railing. The newel posts are in the form of square columns. To this day, the house is heated only by woodstoves.

The Cox and Phipps Mill, later known as the Brookside Mill, is a 3-story heavy timber frame structure of rectangular form, 30' by 35', with three structural bays in each wall. The weatherboarded walls are built of mortised and tenoned hewn oak posts and beams with diagonal braces, all of which is left exposed on the interior. Four massive corner posts, 9 ½ inches square, extend from the sill to the top plate. The smaller members are vertically mill sawn. The basement is built into the steep creek bank so that the building rises 48' above the creek on the east side and 33' above the road on the west side. The road provides access to both main floors. Saddle Creek flows along the east side at the basement level. The basement wall on the west side is of concrete. It was built of frame covered with vertical boards and resting on a lower stone foundation on the other three sides. There are three window bays on the side walls of the main two floors and two windows, one in each of the outer bays, of the south end wall. An off-center Dutch door occupies the middle bay of the west gable front below a second-floor access door. There are six-over-six double-hung windows on each elevation: six windows on the north and south sides, 3 on the west, and 4 on the east. There are six-light casements in the gables. There are two pairs of millstones, one pair for corn and one for wheat, symmetrically located on a raised *hurst frame* in the center of the east end of the second level. The *hurst frame* is an entirely independent structure that serves to transmit the forces of the mill machinery directly to the ground in order to minimize vibrations and prevent long-term damage to the greater mill structure. The millstones needed to be sharpened periodically. For this purpose, a crane situated between the pairs of stones was used for lifting off each top stone. The miller could then carefully work on the cut faces of both the top and bottom stones with a curved, sharpened hammer of fine tempered steel. The stones were powered by the massive (20' 6" dia., 36" wide)

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Brookside Farm & Mill
Grayson County, Virginia

Section 7 Page 3

metal overshot waterwheel in the center of the east wall exterior, with most of the gears in the basement story. The wheel rests between two concrete platforms, one apart and parallel to the mill, and one built into the rear wall of the mill structure. The axle of the wheel runs through bearings situated on top of the concrete platforms to the cogged wheel drive in the basement. Satellite gears drove the pair of millstones and later were connected by a system of belts and belt wheels that powered the roller equipment in the upper levels. The upper floor and attic are the sites of the bolting and storage bins. An extensive array of roller equipment, which collectively supplanted the millstones in 1914, now occupies the upper floors. With installation of the belt-driven roller equipment, the gear-driven wheat millstone became obsolete; yet it was retained in place and could have been used on occasion by simply engaging a lever. The corn millstone continued to function along with the new (wheat) roller mill, and the same waterwheel and main shaft continued to power all functions of the mill. The second floor and third floors house the corn cleaner, wheat cleaner, flour grader or bolter, and bleaching and sifting equipment, with the complex system of bins, hoppers, troughs, shafts, belts, pulleys, and chains powered by a long belt from the main shaft in the basement. Astonishingly, nearly all of the equipment survives in situ, and in good condition.

Fields Mack Cox (1888-1975) maintained a blacksmith shop for his own use. It sat near the corncrib but has been gone since 1986. Although they might be mistaken as being much older, some of the wrought iron hardware found today throughout the property was forged by him.

Inventory of Resources

1) Cox House "Brookside". 1877. Principal dwelling on property (see detailed description, above). *Contributing building.*

2) Smokehouse. ca.1877. 12' by 15'; height 13' 9". Located south of house; A one-story, single-room building constructed of handmade brick laid up in 7-course American bond with Flemish variant; with diamond shaped vents, an off-center front entrance, limestone rubble foundation, concrete floor, boarded ceiling, hewn-log top plates, and front gable roof with 2' cantilevered overhang, covered with overlapping V-crimp tin. Hand-forged strap hinges by F. M. Cox on door. *Contributing building.*

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Brookside Farm & Mill
Grayson County, Virginia

Section 7 Page 4

3) **Springhouse.** ca.1877. 15' by 11 ½' Located SE of house; A one-story, single-room building built of handmade brick laid up in 3-course American bond with Flemish variant; diamond pattern of small openings on three sides; small square window aperture on south end; limestone foundation and L-shaped limestone wall at north end, 2' thick, which intersects the springhouse brick masonry at its NE corner forming U-shaped space-- 9 ½' by 6 ½', and covered by the deep overhang of the front gable. The roof is covered with asphalt shingles. The overflow of the spring is piped directly into the springhouse where the spring run (used for cooling perishables) is located. The interior has a concrete floor and a boarded ceiling. *Contributing building.*

4) **Corncrib.** ca.1877. 15 ½' by 18' 10" A double-crib structure with covered central drive-through, constructed of saddle-notched, round, un-hewn logs, set on stone piers; and gable roof with deep overhangs on each end, covered with corrugated sheet metal. *Contributing building.*

5) **Henhouse.** ca.1910-12. 20' by 12' weatherboarded frame, shed-roof. *Contributing building.*

6) **Barn/Garage.** c.1955. 45' by 36' concrete block gambrel-roofed barn; replaced a log barn. Covered with V-crimp aluminum roof. *Contributing building.*

7) **Silo (remnants).** ca. 1914. Poured concrete base of silo, 13' 3" diameter, located about 45' south of barn/garage. *Non-contributing structure.*

8) **Cox and Phipps Mill aka. Brookside Mill.** 1876. (see detailed description, above). *Contributing building.*

9) **Miller's cabin.** ca.1880. The dwelling is sited a short distance west of the mill, and is of board-and-batten construction without stud framing, with a fieldstone pier foundation, and a side-gable roof. The wall boards are fastened together with machine-cut nails. The exterior end chimney, built of rough fieldstone, is squat and thick in dimensions. The stones were mortared with a mixture of red clay and slaked lime. The garret joist ends project to the exterior and carry the roof rafter ends. The roof is covered with corrugated sheet metal. The original section measures 18' by 13' 4"; the addition 18' by 10' 4" deep. A board-and-batten rear shed extension hangs out over a bank, its rear corners supported by tree-trunk piers. The front elevation has a batten door and one six-over-six double-hung window. The interior consists of one open room with two additional rooms in shed addition. The garret is reached through a small opening, via a

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Brookside Farm & Mill
Grayson County, Virginia

Section 7 Page 5

crude, wall-mounted ladder. The shed windows are two-over-two sash, double-hung. The addition caused the insertion of a two-over-two window beside the chimney matching those of the new wing and to replace the lost light on the rear. The building was occupied until around 1936. *Contributing building.*

10) Mill dam. c.1914 concrete. Situated north-south across Saddle Creek where it meanders to the west, just upstream from the mill and confluence with small tributary. It replaced the original wooden dam. *Contributing structure.*

11) Mill race (remnants). 1876. Two earthen embankments forming a shallow trough. Much of it is preserved and can be seen upstream (north and west) of the mill. *Contributing structure.*

12) Automotive service station. 1918. Located southwest of main house, on the south side of the long abandoned former roadbed of Rt. 58, it is of light frame construction with board-and-batten siding; poured concrete foundation, roof structure of homemade trusses; two-over-two sash windows; old gas pump; and a "grease pit" cut into the concrete slab floor for mechanics to get underneath a vehicle for servicing. A bay opening 10 ½' wide--large enough to accommodate the vehicles of the time, is centered on the front elevation. The opening is secured by an immense sliding track door. The building measures 50' by 30', thus long trusses were required to span its 30' depth without the use of intermediate supports that would obstruct vehicles and mechanics. Short lengths of lumber were nailed together, forming as many triangles as possible. Each truss was tapered in length to form a shed roof support with plenty of pitch to shed the rain and snow. By the 1938, however, the trusses began to sag, making the installation of support posts necessary. Original two-over-two windows are located one on each end, three on the rear elevation, and one on each side of the front bay entrance. *Contributing building.*

13) Graham House, ca. 1900. Located approximately 3/10 of a mile west of the mill. A one-story, frame dwelling with intersecting gable roofs and central brick chimney, it was originally an L-plan but has subsequent small, frame, shed additions. Original foundation replaced with concrete block. Three-bay front elevation has integral screened-in front porch. New six-over-six replacement sash occupy original apertures with folk-Gothic wood surrounds featuring carved, flattened, ogee arches below ramped heads. Roof is asphalt-shingled. So named for Wallace Graham, the resident miller during the period around the turn of the twentieth century. F.M. Cox, who owned ½ interest in the mill, also occupied the dwelling from ca.1912 through ca.1925. *Contributing building.*

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Brookside Farm & Mill
Grayson County, Virginia

Section 8 Page 6

8. Statement of Significance

Summary and Justification of Criteria

Brookside Farm & Mill have been held by the Cox family since being established in the mid-1870s. The property is eligible for the National Register at the local level under Criterion A for its history as a small-scale yet prosperous farming and grain processing operation in a mountainous rural setting. The mill is also significant in the areas of Commerce and Industry under Criterion A for its importance to the survival of the local community from the second half of the 19th century through the early 20th century, by providing an efficient way of processing grain crops for subsistence and local wholesale distribution. Under Criterion C, the mill is significant in the area of Engineering because of the principles, methods, and material technology employed during two distinct periods of construction and milling processes. The construction and equipment are still extant on site and within the mill structure. The 1918 Cox service station, a fine example of a garage structure from the early automotive era, contributes under Criterion A in the areas of Commerce and Transportation. While the entire Brookside property is eligible under Criterion C in the area of Architecture for its remarkable collection of structures dating from 1876 to 1955. The house, mill and associated structures are exceedingly well crafted and well preserved, possessing an unusually high level of historic integrity. The property as a whole offers exceptional potential for study and interpretation in a region where very few such resources have been preserved. The period of significance for the nominated parcel, under both criteria, begins in 1876 when the mill was constructed, and ends in 1955, when the latest building on the property was constructed.

Historical Background

The history of both the house and the mill began with Melville Beveridge Cox, the grandfather of present owner James M. Cox. Born in 1840, he was one of eleven children of Samuel B. Cox and Elizabeth Bourne Thomas of the Bridle Creek community, about one mile away from Saddle Creek, in Grayson County. In 1861 Cox enlisted in the Confederate Army at Wytheville, Virginia, and was elected lieutenant and later captain of Company C, 45th Virginia Infantry, which saw extensive action in what would become West Virginia. He was shot through both legs at the Battle of White Sulphur Springs in August, 1863, and returned home to Grayson County permanently crippled, but by no means disabled.¹

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Brookside Farm & Mill
Grayson County, Virginia

Section 8 Page 7

The Mill

In the 1870s Captain M. B. Cox began to acquire lands on the waters of Saddle Creek, evidently with the purpose of establishing a mill. On March 17, 1876, Cox formed a partnership with another Confederate veteran, John Phipps, for the operation of a mill on Saddle Creek. On July 3, 1876, Robert Landreth, from the nearby Wythe County community of Speedwell, wrote to Captain M. B. Cox, "I will have my tools at your place this week to start your job." Account books show that on November 7, 1876, two French burr millstones were purchased by the Mills of Cox and Phipps from C. K. Bullock, Mill Furnishing Company of Philadelphia, for \$174 a pair. On February 7, 1877, Landreth was paid \$281.07 for completion of the mill. Account books show that the cost of building materials, labor, and equipment totaled \$1861.90. The mill did a brisk business from the beginning, with two full-time millers. Peter Catron ran the mill during the day, and Levi Bedwell handled operations at night. The small board-and-batten dwelling near the mill is believed to have been erected during this early period. On May 4, 1886, after a lucrative partnership of almost ten years, Phipps sold his share of the business to Cox for \$2400. From this time forward the mill was known as Brookside Mill. Around 1900, miller Wallace Graham ran the operation, residing in the L-shaped one-story frame dwelling that is today known as the Graham House.

Captain Cox died July 4, 1906, but two sons, Kyle T. Cox (1886-1967) and Fields Mack Cox (1888-1975) kept the mill running until the mid-1920s, when Kyle began his career in education. While Kyle retained his interest in the mill, F. M. Cox became its principal operator. F. M. Cox was a man of remarkable skill and expertise who ran and carefully maintained the mill until the spring of 1960, when a flash flood washed out a portion of the mill dam and the mill race.

Some significant changes were made to the mill during the period from 1906-1960. In 1914 a rolling mill was purchased from Wolff Manufacturing Company of Chambersburg, Pennsylvania, and installed by their millwright, L. E. Ganso. Mr. Ganso stayed for the winter, and reportedly stated that the mill was the best framed mill structure he had ever seen. About the same time, the wooden mill dam was replaced with the present concrete dam. The new equipment efficiently processed whole grains of wheat into flour, but took perhaps three times the amount of water needed for running the millstones. Therefore it was usually difficult to operate during the dry summer months due to low water. Often only two hours of operation was possible, after taking four hours to fill the millpond. During the dry periods, however, the corn millstones stayed active and the processed cornmeal remained popular with customers throughout the working life of the

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Brookside Farm & Mill
Grayson County, Virginia

Section 8 Page 8

mill. Mill customers brought their shucked corn or threshed wheat to the mill for grinding, paying a toll of one-eighth of the amount processed. In 1928 the wooden waterwheel was replaced by the present all steel Fitz-type wheel. In 1941 a hammermill for processing unshucked corn and fodder was installed. During the Great Depression, Fields Mack Cox also had an outdoor sawmill on the premises.

The Cox House

On January 18, 1874, Captain Cox married Martha E. Fulton from the Summerfield community of Grayson County. After their betrothal the couple lived with her parents for 3 years before their new house was finally built. If Cox was in no hurry to get into a house of his own, his father-in-law had other ideas. On April 16, 1877, Fulton wrote to his son-in-law:

We looked carefully at your building ground. There is no chance to front the road. The hill must govern. And we will be obliged to make a basement story the front of which can be framed and weatherboarded from the chimneys against the ground the back side which we can do quick as there would only be one face. I will be up in a day or two with hands to dig out the basement. I have engaged 2000 ft of weatherboarding 1600 ft of flooring, one set of joists for the upper story 20 ft long, 8 posts 17 feet long 8 inches square for front porch, 600 ft 1 ½ plank for doors Windows and Fireboards—Let us get the sills for your plates, etc. the windows will be ready. We can get Oak sleepers and Oak joists for the porch, and oak rafters will do. We can have the house ready soon. We want a lot of oak studing.

The house has changed little over the years since it was built. The few significant improvements include the installation of plumbing and the conversion of a second-floor bedroom to a bathroom in 1912; and the installation of electricity in 1937.

Captain Cox and his uncle, Isom Cox, formed a partnership and sold goods from the house for several years. For a time, the Saddle Creek Post Office was operated from the house, with Mrs. M.B. Cox acting as postmaster. Mail was delivered by horseback twice a week.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Brookside Farm & Mill
Grayson County, Virginia

Section 8 Page 9

The Cox Family

Captain Cox and his wife had eleven children—seven sons and four daughters. In 1892, Capt. Cox was elected to the Virginia House of Delegates for a two-year term. His wife, Martha, lived until 1928. She was known as a strong willed and capable woman who kept the estate and farm well intact. A son, Joseph Winston Cox became a prominent lawyer in Washington D.C. and in 1930 was appointed as an associate justice to the Supreme Court of the District of Columbia. Another son, Creed Fulton Cox, graduated from West Point in 1901, served in the Philippine campaign at the time of Aguinaldo's insurrection, was promoted to colonel commanding the 77th Field Artillery in the battles of St. Mihiel and Meuse-Argonnes in World War I, for which he received the Distinguished Service Medal. In 1932 he was promoted to Brigadier General—a rank difficult to achieve in the old army—and made Chief of the Federal Bureau of Insular Affairs. After his retirement in 1938, General Cox returned to Grayson County where he set to work making improvements to his family home on Brookside Farm (it was he who designed the flagstone porch steps and walkways around the house) and restoring another historic home called Summerfield.

In 1932, plans for the new U.S. Highway 58 to replace the old turnpike called for keeping the same alignment as the old road, which came very close to the Cox House. Today the old roadbed is used as a driveway on the Cox property, but had the 1932 plans not been altered, a modern paved highway, heavy with truck traffic, would have effectively ruined the sanctity of the farm and brought potentially damaging vibrations, noise, and pollution. Remarkably, General Cox, then stationed in the Philippines, interceded by drawing an alternate alignment for the new road, using his boyhood memory of the terrain. Perhaps even more remarkable, the highway department modified their plans, and the new highway was diverted away the Cox house.

Among the Cox family members to be credited with the preservation and stewardship of the house, farm and mill, is Kyle T. Cox, who served as Superintendent of Grayson County Schools from 1920 until 1949. With the death of his mother in 1928, he bought out the interests of his siblings, assumed the substantial debts on the property, and with his wife, Elizabeth Jordan of Newbern, Virginia, occupied the house until his death in 1967. Mrs. Cox stayed in the house for another nine years. During the years after her husband's death, Appalachian Power Company sought to build a dam on the nearby New River that would have flooded the Cox House and most of the farm. Mrs. Cox aggressively fought their plans, living just long enough to see that the power company was finally defeated.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Brookside Farm & Mill
Grayson County, Virginia

Section 8 Page 10

Kyle's brother, Fields Mack Cox, co-owner and operator of the mill, is also owed a share of the credit for not only preserving the mill, but for planning and supervising construction of the 1914 concrete dam and the 1918 automotive service station. He maintained a blacksmith shop on the premises for his own use and forged the wrought iron strap hinges and other hardware found today throughout the property. He used his multi-faceted abilities to maintain the mill into his seventies, keeping it in good working order long after most small-time mills became defunct.

James M. Cox (b.1925), who fondly remembers grinding corn at the mill for a summer as a teenager, inherited the house upon the death of his mother in 1976, and subsequently bought out the remaining interest in the mill and lands from his first cousin, the daughter of F. M. Cox. Having grown up on the farm, he had left as a young man to make his career, earning a master's degree at University of Michigan in 1948, doctorate at Indiana University in 1955, teaching at Emory and Henry College and Indiana University before beginning his tenure at Dartmouth College in New Hampshire and becoming Professor of English and Avalon Professor in the Humanities. He received American of Council of Learned Society fellowship in 1960 and Guggenheim fellowship in 1972. In 1968 Professor Cox received the prestigious Danforth Award for Distinguished Teaching. Among his publications are the book *Mark Twain: The Fate of Humor*, (Princeton Press, 1966); and essays on numerous American writers including Booker T. Washington. In 1985, after an absence of 43 years (except for summer visits), he returned to Grayson County with his wife, Marguerite Hutchison, and retired to the family farm. For the past two decades they have maintained the property's pristine condition.

The Virginia Department of Agriculture has designated Brookside Farm a *Century Farm*, that is, one that has been in the same family for one hundred years or more. It is one of only three in Grayson County. The farm has also earned recognition for its exemplary conservation land use practices.

Endnotes

1. Based on Cox family bibles, wills, and personal letters, as well as Grayson County deed records, the history provided herein was adapted for this document from an unpublished narrative history composed by James M. Cox, and augmented by notes from interviews with him, December 2004 and March 2005, as well as information from other sources.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Brookside Farm & Mill
Grayson County, Virginia

Section 9 Page 11

9. Bibliography

Bicentennial History of Grayson County, Virginia, 1793. Independence: 1908 Courthouse Foundation; 1995; 113.

Cox, James M. Brookside house and mill description and history. Unpublished typewritten narrative; 1999.

Cox, James M. Personal interviews, December 2004, March 2005, July 2005.

Fields, Bettye-Lou and Jane Hughes. *Grayson County, A History in Words and Pictures*. Independence: Grayson County Historical Society, 1976; 93, 355.

Hamilton, Emory, L. *Old Mills of Far Southwest Virginia*. Wise, Virginia; Historical Society of Southwest Virginia, publication No. 7, July, 1973.

Worsham, Gibson. "Brookside House & Mill, 038-0009." Grayson County Historic Architecture Survey, 2002-3. Virginia Department of Historic Resources.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet

Brookside Farm & Mill
Grayson County, Virginia

Section 10 Page 12

10. Geographic Data

Additional UTM coordinates (WGS84/NAD83)

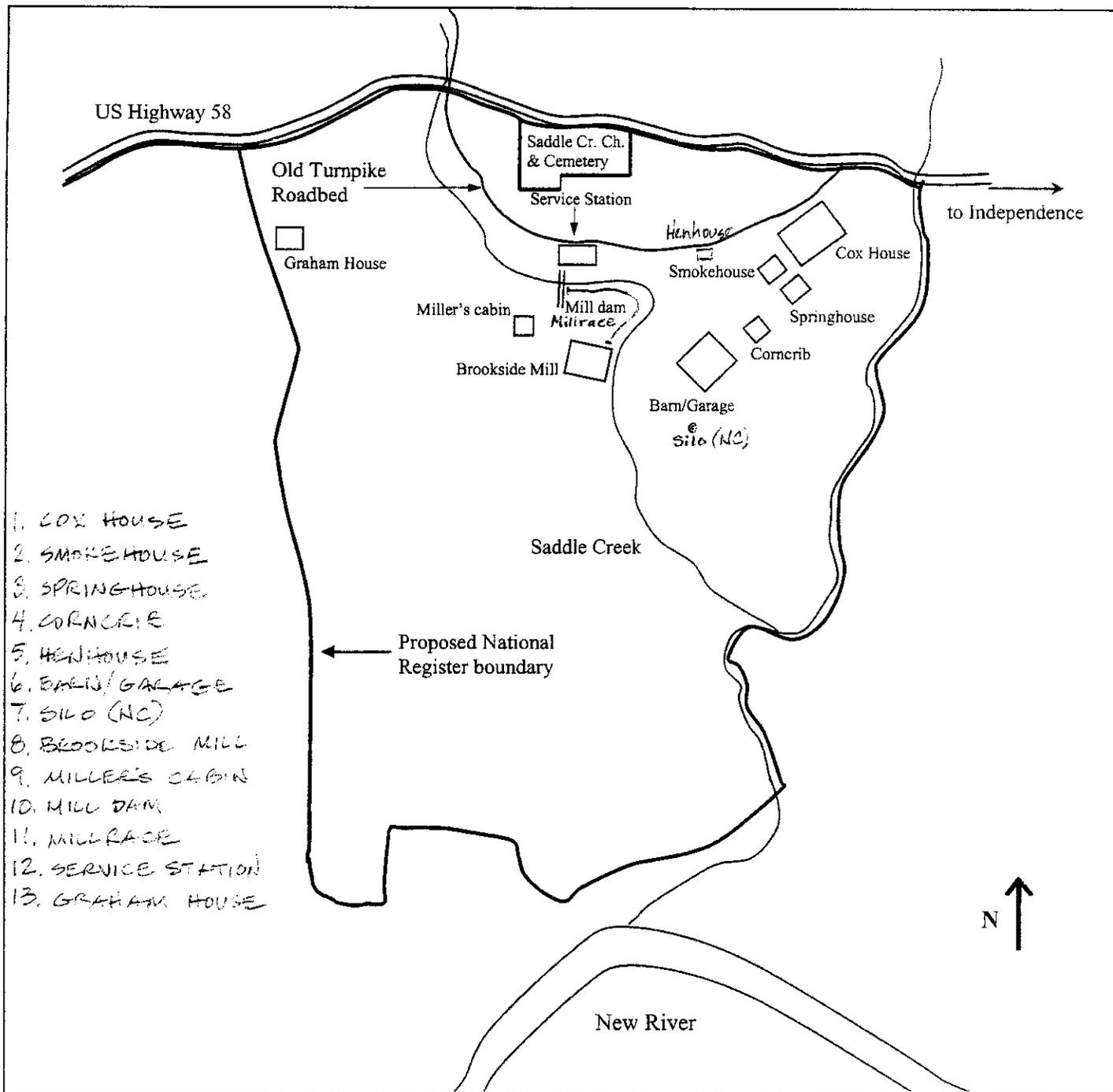
Cox House 17 480149E 4053062N
Brookside Mill 17 480017E 4052889N
Service Station 17 479997E 4052960N
Graham House 17 479545E 4053184N

Verbal Boundary Description

The nominated property is bounded on the north by US Highway 58 and the Saddle Creek Church and Cemetery property, and consists of parcels identified on Grayson County tax maps as parcels 72, 73, 76, 81, 81-A, 82, 82-A, 82-B, part of 91 (on south side of US 58), 92, and 93.

Boundary Justification

The proposed National Register boundary encompasses the large part of Cox family ancestral lands surrounding and including all surviving historic resources, minus the cemetery and grounds of the Saddle Creek Church—land that was donated for construction of the church by Captain M. B. Cox in the late-19th century.



1. COX HOUSE
2. SMOKEHOUSE
3. SPRINGHOUSE
4. CORNCRIB
5. HENHOUSE
6. BARN/GARAGE
7. SILO (NC)
8. BROOKSIDE MILL
9. MILLER'S CABIN
10. MILL DAM
11. MILLRACE
12. SERVICE STATION
13. GRAHAM HOUSE

Brookside Farm & Mill
 Grayson County, Virginia
 038-0009
 July 2005

sketch by M. Pulice
 NOT TO SCALE



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY

81° 15' 36° 37' 30" 78° 00' E 79 1:200 000 FEET (VA SOUTH) 81 12' 30" 82 83

Handwritten notes on the left side of the map:
Bridle Creek Farm
Mill
Cem. Co. VA
1. 11/179111/14053181
2. 11/179111/14051542
3. 11/179111/14051476
4. 11/180510/14052884

