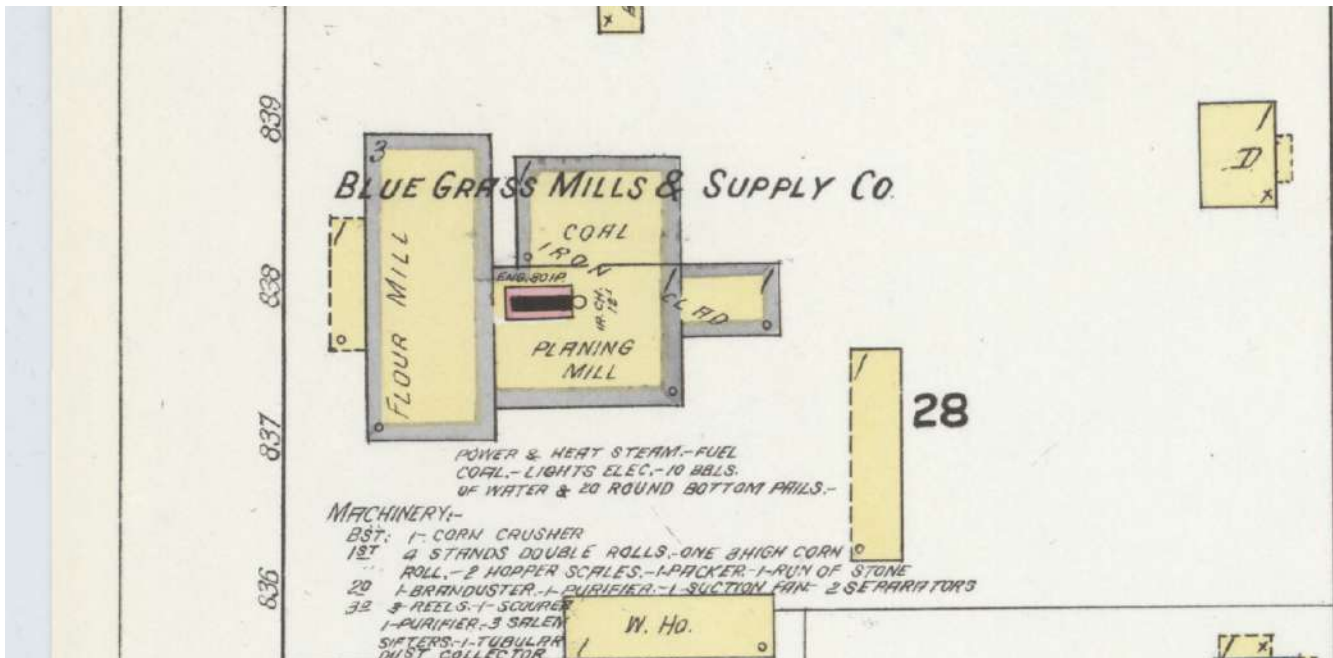


Blue Grass Mill 1907 – 1961



Sanborn 1910 Fire Map

Library of Congress, Geography and Map Division, Sanborn Maps Collection

Comparing the 1905 and 1910 Sanborn Fire Maps, it can be seen that the 180 HP steam engine, 2200 volt AC dynamo, and the 50' chimneys for the electric plant had been removed and the 80 HP steam engine was used to power a planing mill. The configuration of the flour mill had not been changed: There was a corn crusher in the basement; 4 double roller mills, a corn roll, 2 hopper scales, 1 packer, and 1 run of stone were on the first floor, 1 bran duster, 1 purifier, 1 suction hose, and 2 separators were on the second floor; and 3 reels, 1 scourer, 1 purifier, 3 salen sifters, and 1 tubular dust collector were on the third floor. The mill was powered by coal and steam and had electric lights. Fire protection was 10 barrels of water and 20 round bottom pails.

After the Lewisburg Milling & Electric Co. was sold to Blue Grass Milling in 1907, the business changed hands many times before Rosalie Detch sold it to the Old Red Mill in 1961. The products and services that Bluegrass Milling provided over the years reflected the changing agricultural practices in the Greenbrier Valley. In 1909 there were 20,000 acres of corn and wheat grown in the Greenbrier Valley (1), but farms were switching from producing grain to raising livestock. In 1925, the Greenbrier Division of the C&O Railroad loaded 891 cars of livestock from 7 stations along the Greenbrier River and cattle shipments continued until after WW II. There were livestock pens with watering facilities at North Caldwell and Renick. The railroad also delivered various farm supplies to the stations along the river (2). Over the years, advertisements for the Bluegrass Milling Company illustrated the transition from producing wheat flour to grinding grain for livestock feed to selling farm machinery.

Today, approximately 800 farms in the Greenbrier Valley raise approximately 47,000 head of cattle

annually with the pastures used for grazing or growing hay or corn for feed (3). Grain is still grown here with approximately 400 acres of corn and soybeans planted along Houfnagle Road. Needless to say, the grain is not processed or used locally but enters the commercial grain market.

November 17, 1906

The Bluegrass Milling Co. is incorporated by James Laing, 36 shares; S. Lewis Price, 25 shares; James M. Preston, 123 shares; Richard Jasper, 35 shares; Fred W. Snyder, 27 shares; John A. Preston, 11shares

November 22, 1906

The Lewisburg Milling and Electric Co's plant was sold at public auction here last Thursday and was knocked down at \$25,700 to a company of which, we understand, Lewis S. Price, Jas. Laing, Richard Jasper, John A. Preston, Jas. M. Preston, and Fred Snyder are members.

Greenbrier Independent Vol 41 #21

January 10, 1907

Advertisement Go to the Blue Grass Milling Company when in need of Flour, meal, Bran, Mill Feed, Corn and Oats, Chop, Cracked Corn, Salt, Coal, Etc. ***Our "Golden Grown", "Fast ???", and "L.M. Co." flour is equal to any made. *** We are constantly in the market for good milling wheat and corn, and pay the highest market prices. Try Blais??? calf Meal with your calves, for sale by us. Give me a call and be convinced. Blue Grass Milling company Lewisburg West Virginia

Greenbrier Independent vol 41 no. 28

January 31, 1907

On Tuesday, March 8, 1907 or the first meeting of the Town council of the Town of Lewisburg, in March 1907, the undersigned will move the said Council to grant it the privilege and franchise for fifty years to maintain its poles and wires and appliances on the streets, alleys, and public places in said town of Lewisburg and to erect and maintain for a like period other poles, wires, and appliances for the purpose of lighting the streets of said Town and the dwellings and the other buildings therein. Any person interested will please attend said meeting .

The application of the Blue Grass Milling Co. is filed with the recorder of the Town of Lewisburg. The Blue Grass Milling Co., a Corporation. *Greenbrier Independent vol 41 no. 31*

March 14, 1907

TOWN COUNCIL Claims allowed: Blue Grass Milling Co., Lights for February, \$50. Franchise request approved with "amend said order by inserting a provision to the effect that Council reserves the right to regulate the charges . . . if in the future said charges shall be increased so as to be unreasonably high." *Greenbrier Independent vol 41 no. 37*

May 19, 1907 Deed 74-242

". . . it is therefore ordered that James Laing the President of this corporation make a deed for the property of this corporation to the said Blue Grass Milling company as soon as all the purchase money shall be paid and whereas said purchase money has been paid in full, now therefore this deed: . . . those two certain parcels of land adjoining each other . . . upon which is situated the Lewisburg

Milling and Electric Light plant, together with all buildings thereon, and also the fixtures belonging thereto and all appurtenances thereto belonging, and the appliances, machinery, wires, poles and other things used in the electric light plant. . . also the grain of every kind in said mill and the product, thereof, also two teams (4 horses, 2 wagons, and harness) and all its other personal property . . . “

October 1, 1907 Deed 83-635

The Blue Grass Milling company sells the electric light plant to the Consolidated Light and Power Co. of Ronceverte

“. . . doth hereby sell the said plant . . . including the large Corliss engine, the Bullock dynamo, about fourteen feet of line shafting, belting, switch-boards, transformers, poles, wires, material on hand, etc., it being the intention hereof to include in said sale the entire electric light plant, outfit, and equipment, except the boilers . . .”

The deed further specifies that for 6 months, CL&P can operate the light plant for free but will provide BGM with electricity for lighting and up to one ton of coal per day to operate the mill with all coal being purchased from the Lewisburg Supply Company.

September 1, 1908 Deed 77-126

S. Lewis Price, Vice President of the Blue Grass Milling Company conveys the property and mill to G.S. Alderson for \$3,000 notes and 382 acres of land near Keeney's Knob valued at \$12,000. “. . . those two certain parcels of land adjoining each other . . . upon which is situated the milling plant . . . together with all buildings thereon and also the fixtures belonging and appertaining thereto.”

[It is interesting to note that in 1897, G.S. Alderson had purchased the large Cox flour mill near the Beirne Spring and operated it until it was destroyed by fire in 1899.]

September 10, 1908

ANNOUNCEMENT The undersigned, under the firm name Blue Grass Milling Co. have purchased and taken charge of the Lewisburg roller mill and will engage in a general milling business. Wheat, corn, and all kinds of grain wanted – highest market prices paid. Will also do custom grinding. G.S. Alderson, C.W. Dunbar, J.M. Dunbar, M.L. Dunbar *Greenbrier Independent* vol 43 no. 11

October 15, 1908

The Blue Grass Milling co. requests all persons indebted to them to settle with J.M. Preston before Oct. 20th. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 43 no. 16

February 23, 1909 Deed 78-195

G.S. Alderson conveys the steam mill he purchased in September 1908 to the Blue Grass Mill & Supply Company, a corporation.

February 25, 1909

The Blue Grass Milling and Supply Company, of Lewisburg, was chartered last week. Capital stock. \$17,000 – all subscribed and paid in. Stockholders as follows: S.W. Dean, G.S. Alderson, M.L. Dunbar, C.W. Dunbar, and J.M. Dunbar. The company will engage in a general milling business and handle fertilizers, coal, seeds, salt, etc. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 43 no. 35

March 24, 1914 Deed 86-305

The Blue Grass Mill & Supply Company conveys the Old Tan Yard and mill to C.W. And J.M. Dunbar.

“ . . . All of the real estate situated on Jefferson Street in said town of Lewisburg, adjoining Surbaugh and others and known as the Old Tan Yard property, together with all machinery, motors, shafting, belts, pulleys, screeners, bolters, and all other kinds and character of machinery used in the property herein conveyed, . . . ”

February 10, 1916 Deed 89-387

“ . . . It being the intention of the parties hereto each to convey to the other all his right, title and interest in and to the real and personal property herein before described, that is to say the said J.M. Dunbar to convey to C.W. Dunbar all of his right, title, and interest in and to all the property located at Lewisburg, and the said C.W. Dunbar to convey to said J.M. Dunbar all of his right, title, and interest in all the property located at Spring Creek. . . .

C.W. Dunbar conveys to J.M. Dunbar “ . . . that certain tract or parcel of real estate, situated in the town of Lewisburg, upon which is located the mill now being operated as the Blue Grass Milling Co., and the two dwelling houses, with out houses connected therewith, . . . and also all their right title and interest in and to all personal property in the said mill building, including machinery, grain and everything used in connection with the said mill, as well as the interest of the said J.M. Dunbar in all bills receivable, notes, demands or claims due the said blue Grass Milling Company,

And J.M. Dunbar conveys to C.W. Dunbar “ . . . all of the real estate lying and being in Falling Spring District, at Spring Creek, which the said parties hereto are the joint owners thereof, consisting of the mill property, ware house, the Thomas lot, together with all the buildings thereon, and all the personal property of every kind and character, consisting of machinery, book accounts, bills receivable, notes, claims, and demands, horses, wagons, harness, and any and all personal property now owned by the Spring Creek Milling Co., which is a partnership of said C.W. And J.M. Dunbar. . . . ”

February 24, 1916

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION We the undersigned, heretofore doing business at Lewisburg W. Va. , as the “Blue Grass Milling Co.” and at Spring Creek, W. Va. as the “Spring Creek Milling Co.” have by mutual consent, dissolved their partnerships: C.W. Dunbar taking all property, real and personal, at Lewisburg, W. Va. and J.M. Dunbar all property, real and personal, at Spring Creek, W. Va. C.W. Dunbar J.M. Dunbar *Greenbrier Independent* vol 50 no. 5

February 10, 1922

CE-RE-A-LIA SWEETS It pays to please your cows: The best feed in the world won't produce milk if your cows turn their nose away from it. . . . Four weeks trial at our risk: Feed one cow 4 weeks on Ce-re-a-lia Sweets and make us prove these two points: First that you will get more milk or better milk. Second, that your actual profit will be greater; If Ce-re-a-lia costs more than you are paying now, the improvement in flow or test must more than make it up. Money back if either test fails. Ask us for details. Blue Grass Milling Company Advertisement - *Greenbrier Independent* vol

November 17, 1922

BLUE GRASS MILLING CO. Our specialties: Golden Crown, Graham, Buckwheat Flour, Corn Meal (bolted), Corn and Oats Chop, Mill Feed and Dairy Feed. Ad - *Greenbrier Independent* vol no.

July 18, 1930

BURGLARS ENTER MILL The Blue Grass Milling company's mill was entered through the basement some time during Wednesday night and from \$10 to \$20 in cash taken *Greenbrier Independent* vol 65 no. 5

January 30, 1931

HAS CARRIER PIGEON Marvin Tuckwiller at the Blue Grass Mill shortly after a snowstorm recently noticed a pigeon with larger wings and shorter bill with the pigeons that hang around the mill and a few days ago it came in the mill and he caught it and is now caring for the bird, which he found was a carrier pigeon with a silver band on its leg marked "NPA K-3630."

Greenbrier Independent vol 65 no. 33

July 19, 1935

NOTICE TO FARMERS, FEED BUYERS The Bluegrass Milling Company's mill located at Lewisburg W. Va. Has been leased by R.L. Groseclose of Alderson. the mill is now being thoroughly cleaned and overhauled and will be put in first class shape and all products will be Guaranteed absolutely satisfactory. Expect to be ready to grind about August 1. Will carry in stock a full line of flour, bread meal, soft wheat fed, , Tuxedo feeds, hay, straw, salt, and fertilizer. Hope to be in position to handle all the surplus wheat the farmer has to sell. Good dry wheat will be taken in on deposit for exchange. Any business given us will be appreciated. Bluegrass Milling Co. R.L. Groseclose, Miller and Manager

Greenbrier Independent vol 70 no. 4

[No ads or articles have been located regarding the Bluegrass Mill during this 12 year period.]

May 31, 1947 Deed 158-359

C.E. McLaughlin acquires the final interest in the Blue Grass Mill and now is the sole owner. Ads over the next few years indicate his attempt to keep the company successful.

December 23, 1948

ADVERTISEMENT All too often we forget to speak our thoughts of the fine people of this community where it is our privilege to serve. Our good wishes are many, however, and we deeply appreciate your friendship and association. Merry Christmas! Bluegrass Milling Co. Phone 83 Lewisburg, W. Va.

Greenbrier Independent vol 83 no.27

January 14, 1950

SOUTHERN STATES ADVERTISEMENT Look to Southern States for "Seeds that Really Grow" Place your order now for spring seeds. Clovers, Oats, Hybrid Corn, Etc. For quality the answer is Open Formula Co-Op Fertilizers. We offer 10-10-10 and 4-16-8 for Corn as well as lower grade analyses Order now – delivery when you want it. Southern States Ronceverte Service phone 508 Ronceverte, WV

Greenbrier Independent vol 84 no. 31

(The Bluegrass Milling advertisements over the next few years might have been their response to a new competitor.)

January 3, 1952

ADVERTISEMENT Here it is . . . In a class by itself . . . the new FERGUSON "30" [drawing of tractor] Look at it . . . Get that feeling of weight and traction . . . size and power. Here's a tractor that will meet more of your needs more of the time than any other tractor you could buy. No other tractor ever produced has better torque characteristics (lugging power). It will pull you through the toughest soil without slowing or stalling. It will keep on going when other tractors quit. A host of engineering advancements including: A great new engine that develops over 30 ¼ horse power; A new air-fuel system that results in longer engine life; Heavier gearing to give longer rear-end life. Come in for a demonstration Bluegrass Milling Co. Phone 83 Lewisburg Ferguson Tractor
Greenbrier Independent vol 86 no. 29

March 20, 1952

ADVERTISEMENT Order Fertilizer Now You have doubtless seen in the newspapers and farm bulletins the necessity for early movement in fertilizers. This, in our opinion, is most important. If fertilizer doesn't begin to move early, it will be impossible to supply everyone's needs when wanted

We suggest that all farmers have a place to properly store their fertilizers to take your fertilizer home. You have nothing to lose by doing this; doubtless, much to gain.

Also book your Seed Corn and Grass Seed early. We carry McCullough's Grass Seeds – Park's and Frank's Seed Corn - Place Your Order With Us – Bluegrass Milling Co Phone '83 Lewisburg
Greenbrier Independent vol 86 no. 40

October 15, 1953

ADVERTISEMENT Our new co-operative advertising plan SPECIAL OFFER We are now giving our business cards to our customers These business cards are good for Wm. A. Rogers Silverware made and guaranteed by Oneida, Ltd. (drawing of 3 spoon patterns)

Just think of it! All you do is save these business cards given you with purchases made at our store, and they are redeemable for beautiful Wm. A. Rogers silverware in your choice of three exquisite designs. Start your set today and you will be agreeably surprised how fast your silverware cards will accumulate.

This is made possible for you through a special arrangement we have made with the Rogers Silverware Redemption Bureau, Inc. of 855 Sixth Avenue, New York 1, New York

Send the required amount of cards listed on the back of each card or in the catalog to the New York office and the silverware will be forwarded to you by Parcel Post Insured Prepaid "Remember to ask for Rogers Silverware Cards" They are truly valuable Bluegrass Milling Co. Phone 83 Lewisburg W. Va. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 88 no 18

November 19, 1953

DAIRYMEN MEETING The Bluegrass Milling Company will show a colored movie about pipeline milking on actual farms. Mastitis will be discussed from a veterinarian's viewpoint. The show will be at the Court House on Friday, November 20, at 8 PM. Refreshments will be served. The public is invited. *Greenbrier Independent* vol 88 no. 23

December 8, 1955 Deed 193-613

W.J. McLaughlin conveys the "Bluegrass Milling property" to Woodrow Taylor and Rosalie Detch after a Circuit Court chancery cause decree on 11/8/1955:

" . . do hereby grant, sell, assign, and convey with covenants of general warranty of title, . . all of that certain real estate situate in the Town of Lewisburg, Greenbrier County, West Virginia, together with all improvements thereon and appurtenances thereto appertaining, known locally as the Bluegrass Milling property. . .

"The said parties of the first part do hereby convey and assign any and all of their interests of every nature and description in the above described property including all the right, title, and interest which the said C.E. McLaughlin may have therein under and by virtue of a certain decree of the Circuit Court of Greenbrier County, West Virginia, dated November 8, 1955, entered in the chancery cause wherein C.E. McLaughlin and others were plaintiffs and Margaret Nelson Johnson and others were defendant, and the said C.E. McLaughlin does hereby direct that the Special Commissioner of said Court, appointed by said decree, do make and execute his deed as provided by said decree to the grantees named in this deed. . .

"The possession of said real estate shall be delivered on February 1, 1956."

January 10, 1956 Deed 194-326

" . . this deed is executed and delivered only for the purpose of perfecting the title granted . . . by said deed from said C.E. McLaughlin and others dated December 8, 1955, recorded in said Clerk's Office in Deed Book 193, at page 613. . . .

"Witnesseth: That whereas, the said Special Commissioner, in accordance with a decree of the Circuit Court of Greenbrier County, West Virginia, made on the 8th day of November, 1955, in a chancery suit therein pending, wherein C.E. McLaughlin and others were plaintiffs, and Margaret Nelson Johnson and others were defendants, was directed to make a deed of the hereinafter described property to C.E. McLaughlin upon the failure of the defendant named in said suit to make and execute a deed for said property within thirty (30) days after the adjudgement of said Court. . .

" Now therefore, this deed witnesseth: That the said John L. Detch, as Special commissioner as aforesaid, and C.E. McLaughlin and Mary Agnes McLaughlin, his wife, do hereby Grant, Sell, Assign, and Convey, with covenants of Special Warranty of title as to said Special Commissioner and with covenants of General Warranty of title as to the said C.E. McLaughlin and Mary Agnes McLaughlin, unto the said Rosalie S. Detch, Woodrow Taylor and Daisy Taylor an undivided on-half (½) interest in and to that certain tract or parcel of land situate in the Town of Lewisburg, Greenbrier county, West Virginia, known locally as the Bluegrass Milling Company property. . . "

February 9, 1956

FOR SALE: Valuable business building in Lewisburg, 3-story building of strong construction. Known as the Bluegrass Mill property, 1 ½ blocks from main intersection in Lewisburg. 7,800 square feet of floor space, suitable for retail store, warehouse, or recreation center. Over 200 feet of frontage on route 219. Ample parking space and room for expansion. All utilities available. Excellent business opportunity. Can be financed. Call John L. Detch, phone 663
Advertisement - *Greenbrier Independent* vol 90 no. 35

August 1,1961 Deed 214-16

Rosalie and John Detch and Woodrow and Daisy Taylor convey the “old Blue Grass Mill property” to the Old Red Mill, Inc for \$20,000:

“ . . all of that certain lot or parcel of land, together with all improvements thereon and appurtenances thereto pertaining situate and being in the Town of Lewisburg, Greenbrier county, West Virginia, known as the old Blue Grass Mill property. . . “

(Then for the next 50 years, the property is known as 'Fort Savannah'.)

References

- (1) WVU Agriculture Experiment Station Bulletin #144, 1914 WVU # 3 0802 100896117 3
- (2) *The Durbin Route*, William Price McNeel, Pictorial Histories Publishing Company, Charleston WV 1985, p. 37
- (3) *The Secret World of Greenbrier Valley: Agricultural Runoff and Water Quality*, <https://www.stormwater.com/bmps/article/13001352/the-secret-world-of-greenbrier-valley-agricultural-runoff-and-water-quality>