



Alexandria Times

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Out of the Attic

Cameron Mills and Farm

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Image: *The Roberts Family Home. Photo, Office of Historic Alexandria.*

In the late 18th century the small community of Cameron was situated west of the Alexandria town limits, near the present-day intersection of Telegraph Road and Cameron Run. The location of Cameron Mills is noted on a 1798 map where gristmills were operating by that time.

In the first half of the 19th century, the mills and adjacent land were sold twice before being acquired in 1848 by two Quaker brothers from New Jersey. Reuben and Robert Roberts and their descendants operated the mills and established a working farm at the site.

One mill was soon incorporated into the Alexandria Water Company when the Roberts family sold it in 1851. It was converted into a pumping station to supply the new reservoir on Shuter's Hill with water from the millrace.

According to later records, the farm property included the Roberts family home, seen in this photograph, and several outbuildings including a cow barn, horse barn, smokehouse, icehouse, and blacksmith and carpenter shop. Into the early 20th century, Walter Roberts, a son of Robert and a miller by trade, was operating a feed and grain company on the site but had his business office at 106 South Union Street.

The site later became part of the Hoffman property along Eisenhower Avenue and when the Hoffman Management Company planned a retail expansion in 1998, archaeological investigations were conducted. Archaeologists identified the foundations of some farm structures and evidence of the old millrace. Today the names of nearby streets, Roberts Land and Mill Road, hint at the site's past.



"Out of the Attic" is published each week in the Alexandria Times newspaper. The column began in September 2007 as "Marking Time" and explored Alexandria's history through collection items, historical images and architectural representations. Within the first year, it evolved into "Out of the Attic" and featured historical photographs of Alexandria.

These articles appear with the permission of the Alexandria Times and were authored by Amy Bertsch, former Public Information Officer, and Lance Mallamo, Director, on behalf of the Office of Historic Alexandria.