

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

1. Name of Property

historic name Churchill Weavers, Inc.

other names/site number MA-B-79

2. Location

street & number 100 Churchill Drive

NA	not for publication
NA	vicinity

city or town Berea

state Kentucky code KY county Madison code 151 zip code 40403

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

national statewide local

Signature of certifying official/Title Craig Potts/SHPO Date _____

Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

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

Signature of commenting official _____ Date _____

Title _____ State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register determined eligible for the National Register

determined not eligible for the National Register removed from the National Register

other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper _____ Date of Action _____

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5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Category of Property
(Check only **one** box.)

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

- private
- public - Local
- public - State
- public - Federal

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

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2	0	buildings
		district
		site
		structure
		object
2	0	Total

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

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

NA

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Industry: Manufacturing Facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Work in progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

Other: Early 20th Century Industrial Building

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions.)

foundation: Concrete/Slate

walls: Brick, Asbestos

roof: Asphalt, Aluminum, Plastic

other: Brick, Plywood, Stone, Iron, Glass

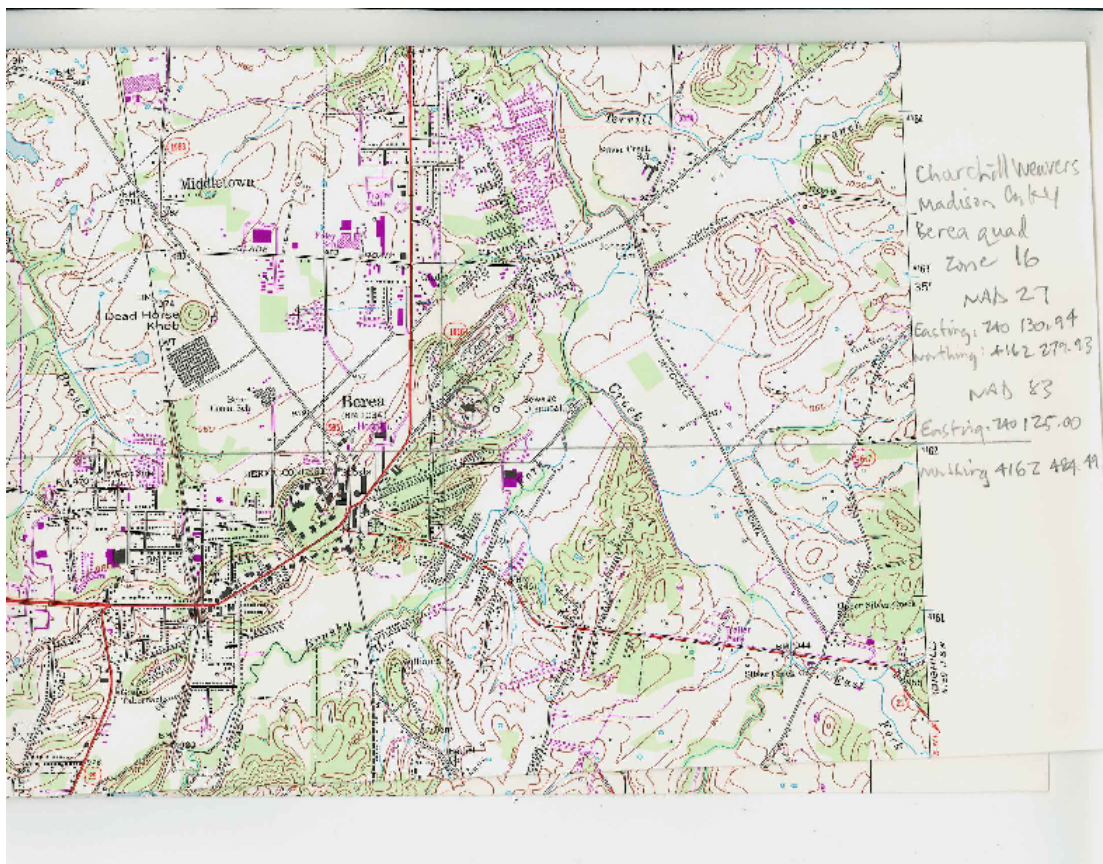
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Narrative Description

Summary Paragraph

The Churchill Weaver factory building (MA-B-79) is located at 100 Churchill Drive, built in 1922, and used as a loom house located on the outskirts of Berea, Kentucky. The Churchill building sits on 3.5 acres of property. The building is located on the south side of Lorraine Court with the front entrance to the building facing north. The Berea Country Club and Golf Course now back up to the south side of the property line. There is a residential area to the immediate east, west, and north. The area proposed for listing is 3.5 acres, and contains 2 contributing buildings.



Ownership and Use of Site

Previous to 1922, the property was the Eversole farm.

David Carroll Churchill and his wife Eleanor Churchill built the original loom house for Churchill Weavers in 1922 when they made the decision to build a hand-weaving industrial plant.

As the business grew, additions were made to the building. The original building was used as a loom house. A gift shop for Churchill Weavers product line was originally located two blocks from the loom house on what was at that time a major highway. Two more wings were soon added to house more looms between the years of 1922 and 1930. The downstairs of the building was used as a wood working shop, boiler room, break room, and storage for the finished product line. The main level was used as a loom house and the upstairs used for office space. The gift shop was added to

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the front of the original building in 1954 to sell Churchill Weavers product line as well as crafts made by artisans from around the country.

D. C. Churchill retired from 45 years of serving as president of Churchill Weavers at the age of 93. He was voted honorary chairman and his wife Eleanor took over as president. D. C. Churchill died in 1969 at the age of 96. Eleanor continued to run Churchill Weavers alone until 1973. Eleanor wanted the legacy of Churchill Weavers to continue, choosing Lila and Richard Bellando as her successors. The Bellandos took out a loan to purchase 100 percent of Churchill Weavers stock over a 20 year period.

Churchill Weavers was sold to Crown Crafts of Atlanta Georgia in 1996 by the Bellandos. The agreement was made with Crown Crafts that the company would still be operated by Lila and Richard Bellando. The Bellandos made the decision to sell the company to Crown Crafts in order for their employees to receive benefits that they could not offer them. With this agreement also came corporate expertise and additional resources for production. The business continued to grow and in 2003, a concrete building was constructed on the back west side of the building to house yarn and could be used as a loading dock.

Churchill Weavers permanently closed its doors in 2007. Churchill's could no longer compete with the prices and it was cheaper for other companies to ship woven garments to the United States to be sold. The Churchill building sat empty from 2007 until 2013, when Bill and Mary Ann West bought the building from Crown Crafts.

Description of Site

The nominated site consists of 2 buildings, the large multi-function factory and a separate building originally used as a wood shop. The buildings are oriented roughly northwest-to-southeast; for simplicity, the front of the building will be referred to as North. The main factory building has a blacktop driveway and parking lot on its west side as well as a partial blacktop and gravel drive on the east side. The workshop sits west of the larger building, at the western edge of the asphalt, surrounded on its north, south, and west by grass. The land is mostly level, and the complex is immediately surrounded by grass, dotted by large trees, giving the larger property a rural setting. A water tower once stood outside the factory, to supply the building's sprinkler system, for fire protection. That feature made the property the first in Berea with such protection. The tower was removed in 1990 or 1991.

Exterior Description of Main Factory Building

The principal building on site was constructed in 5 large portions from 1922-1940, presumably with the first portions at the north and additions stretching to the south. A sixth portion was added at the southern end in 2003; its rough masonry walls, largely devoid of windows, make it very distinct from the other portions. All historic portions of the buildings have rows of metal framed windows that are typical of industrial plants. The historic windows tilt outward to open for ventilation. Each portion, from front to back, will be described.

The most northerly portion is the gift shop. It has a T-plan and a concrete block foundation. It opens to the north(west) with a pair of 12-light doors. On either side of the door is a large multi-light display window. Each window has fixed divided lights, one in a 9-over-4 light configuration, the other in 10-over-4 lights. Inverted board-and-batten wood siding covers the front façade. The front wall terminates in a gable roof. The gift shop has a concrete and block foundation. A shed porch roof

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covers the entrance and the eastern half of the front. A short wall of coursed mortared stone defines the porch floor. Five square wood posts hold up the porch roof. The porch curves slightly at the northeast corner. The wing, which makes the T- of the plan, lacks any windows. The west wall has been re-faced in concrete, and is without windows. Given the picture windows, the modern wood siding, and the refacing of the west side, this portion of the building no longer appears historic.

The second portion in line is also used as a gift shop. The portion has a squarish plan, but a complex roof organization. The roof is split into two halves from front to back; the western half has a gable that runs north-south; the eastern half has a gable running east-west. Shingles cover the roof and asbestos siding covers the exposed walls, on the east and west sides. The west side has few small windows, and those are on the second floor. The east side has a variety of multi-light windows that light the basement, main, and second floor levels; these windows are grouped randomly, not in any pattern of bays. The foundation is concrete block. Windows also light the north side's second floor.

The third portion is the loom house. It provides storage for finished goods, a break room, and has a boiler room in its basement. It has a rectangular plan and its roof extends in 3 parallel gables running north-south. The building is lit by wide expanses of glass. The east and west walls are organized into 4 bays, with wide expanses of glass between substantial brick piers. A typical unit of windows consists of a six gangs of 12 windows (each window in a 4-over-3 fixed-light arrangement), with the gang grouped three wide and one on top of the other. Each side consists of 8 of these window units, four per floor, though the upper floor's window openings are somewhat larger than the ground level's window groupings.

The fourth portion is also a loom house. D.C. Churchill's office is in the basement, as is a loading bay. This portion has a rectangular plan, wider from east-west, which is the direction the gable roof's ridge runs. This portion is two stories tall, and spans 6 structural bays in length. The walls are covered with asbestos shingle siding. A window grouping consists in multiple banks of 6-light sashes. The second floor windows consist of a bank of 12 windows (4 tall, 3 wide) and the first floor window openings are a bank of 9 windows (3 tall, 3 wide). The main access door of this side is on its north face. Its back (south) side is covered by the final two portions.

The fifth portion functions as a loom house on its upper level, a wood workshop on the ground floor for making looms, a boiler room and engine room that operated the entire wood workshop. This portion has a gently-sloped gable roof running north-south, and its walls are covered with asbestos shingles on its upper two floors. This long portion stretches 6 bays north-south and 3 bays wide. A second floor entry is on the rear side, up a stairway. The portion is well lit by numerous banks of windows. A typical window opening contains multiple banks of 6-light sashes. The second-floor and third-floor windows consist of a bank of 12 windows (3 tall, 4 wide); the first floor, which is partially underground, has fixed pane windows. The ground floor shows a mixture of concrete block and asbestos shingle siding. Several pedestrian and double doors punctuate the eastern side. A brick chimney also bisects the east side into pairs of 3 bays.

The sixth portion was constructed in 2003 to provide yarn storage. In plan and profile, it matches the fifth portion, which it sits beside. The sixth portion is a rectangular mass of +concrete block construction, with a gable roof whose ridge runs north-south. Few openings punctuate its west side. The most prominent are two drive-in garage-type doors on the west side, one on the ground floor and another to the floor above that. Both of those doors are at grade, as the grade slopes away toward

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the back of the building. One very small window (6-over-6 light) occurs on the upper floor of the south side, below the gable, and beside it, a louvered vent opening of similar size.

Interior Description of Primary Building

The interior of the original building has exposed metal beams going across the ceiling on the main floor to support the roof as it is a very large and open room, typical of an industrial building. The walls show brick with exposed metal piping once used for heating the building. A boiler room is located in the basement, which sent steam up through the pipes to heat the work space. Two dumb waiters serve the basement and main working floor; they are still in working condition. The building's upper level allowed for the viewing of the weavers as they worked.

The main and upstairs floors have pine hardwood flooring. There are four staircases located in the original building encased in wood. Two staircases lead to the basement and two staircases lead to the upstairs that was once used as office space. The upstairs walls are wood frame with wood paneling and interior vinyl siding panels. There is another set of stairs that leads to the attic that has also been framed with wood and contains some wood paneling. There is little flooring in the attic: the wood beams are exposed. Each room contains multiple windows that can be opened outward for ventilation. Several of the windows are currently missing panes of glass that have been broken due to the lack of building maintenance during the vacancy of the Churchill Building. The basement has concrete block walls and concrete flooring.

The first south wing referred to as portion 4, has brick interior walls on the main floor and hardwood floors. Wood beams are exposed in its high ceiling. Like the original building, it is also a large open room typical of an industrial building. The walls again have exposed piping for what was once used to heat the building. There is a bathroom located on the west side of the wing. The set of stairs going to the basement is cased in wood. The basement walls are wood and asbestos and the floor is concrete. Both floors offer many windows that can be opened for ventilation. Some are missing panes of glass.

The second south wing referred to as portion 5, consists of hardwood floors on the main floor and exposed wood beams to support the roof. The walls are wood frame with pressed wood panels. It again is a large open room consistent with industrial buildings. There are two staircases leading to the basement from this room. The first staircase has wooden hand rails on one side and an exterior wall on the other. The second staircase is encased in a wood frame. The down stairs has wood slats on its walls and a concrete floor.

Changes to the property since the Period of Significance

The pinewood floors on the main floor of the loom houses have been painted and yellow lines added to mark the path for visitors to travel while touring Churchill Weavers. The downstairs floors have also been painted and yellow lines added for the same reason. When the business became successful, the gift shop was extended eastwardly to add more retail space.

The most significant change was the final wing added referred to as portion 6, to the building in 2003 constructed of a block foundation. It has exterior walls made of concrete block and metal. The interior walls consist of concrete block and metal on the main level as well as the downstairs area. Both floors are concrete. There is an industrial elevator located in this part of the building to transfer

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materials between the two floors. A loading dock is also located on the west side of this wing as well as several exterior doors. There is only one window that is located in a small office on the main floor of the building.

Description of Contributing Building

The former wood workshop stands at the west side of the parking lot, referred to as portion 7. It is a wood frame and vinyl sided structure with a concrete pad floor. It was built sometime after World War II. There was once a loft inside the building that could be used for storage. The loft has since been torn down by the current owners due to safety concerns. There is a large barn-style door on the south side of the building as well an entrance on the east side of the building. Eight windows—2 groups of four—also line the east side wall. The building is sound with cosmetic faults due to a lack of maintenance. Churchill planned to make furniture and other crafts in the structure, but the venture did not succeed, so the equipment was moved to the basement of the primary building. The building was later used for power looms that were added to make baby blankets. The blankets were made from a patented pattern and sold under a different name. The baby blankets from the power loom were not successful and the building was then converted to storage.

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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.

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions.)

Invention

Industry

Period of Significance

1922-1967

Significant Dates

1922, 1930, 1967

Significant Person

(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

David Carroll Churchill

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Architect/Builder

N/A

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

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

Period of Significance: This nomination follows the National Register convention for a property meeting Criterion A: the Period of Significance, 1922-1967, marks the time during which the property is important within its historic context. The period in which the Churchill Weavers building was significant extends a few years beyond the 50 year threshold. The company continued to contribute to the craft industry of Berea, shipping its hand woven product line until 2007 when Churchill Weavers closed its doors.

Criteria Considerations: NA

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Statement of Significance

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The Churchill Weavers building (MA-B-79) meets both National Register Criteria A and B. The Churchill Weavers building meets National Register Criterion A for its significant association with the arts and crafts industry of Berea, Kentucky. It was the first industrial plant not associated with the college, bringing much needed jobs to the mountain area. Churchill Weavers employed 50 to 150 people at a time. Churchill weavers was founded by David Carroll Churchill and his wife Eleanor in 1922 when they decided to develop the hand-weaving craft already active in the mountain region. The company started after the engineering of a new fly-shuttle loom by D.C. Churchill himself. The Churchill Weavers industry thrived and additional loom houses had to be added to keep up with the demand for its product line. Churchill Weavers was in business from 1922 until it closed its doors in 2007. The property meets Criterion B for Churchill's significance in the area of invention. He applied engineering skills to the mechanical process of weaving, a tradition-bound craft. Churchill constructed better and more efficient hand looms while working as a missionary in India, years before he founded Churchill Weavers (Chamberlain, pg. 80). He offered these skills to improve the lives of people in India, then found an area in the United States to do the same, again, innovating the production of traditional fabrics. While his engineering aptitude served the business, his inventions also had applications in the aeronautical field. He invented, among other things, the first retractable landing gear used by the army in World War I (Chamberlain, pg. 86), as well as wing covers to help keep planes from being grounded due to ice during World War II (The Churchill Chronicle, pg. 7 and Chamberlain pg. 90). His work even skirted the space age, with an invitation to develop anti-thermal coveralls to be worn under pressurized high altitude suits by the first astronauts (The Churchill Chronicle pg. 11). The fabric, made of glass and rayon, was made at Churchill Weavers and is currently archived at the Kentucky Historical Society with other Churchill Weavers items. From helping villagers weave fabric in British-colonial India, to his assistance of the US Government's nascent efforts to send men into space, few have had D.C. Churchill's remarkable range of experience.

Historic Context: Craft Productions in Berea, Kentucky 1900-1960

Berea College crafts is the most significant craft business in the area in comparison to Churchill Weavers. Berea College began with student workers making crafts in lieu of paying tuition. Since 1893, Berea College has thrived in the craft department. The craft department has provided national and international sales and marketing of student-produced items such as wood, weaving, jewelry, blacksmithing, ceramics, broom making, and needle craft (www.berea.edu).

Berea's "Fireside Industries" first began in 1883 followed by the "Homespun Fair" in 1896 giving Berea College the lead in the Appalachian craft revival for several years to come. Berea College's weaving and marketing department became the full time job of the Dean of Women, Miss Josephine Robinson, by 1899. A Berea coverlet won the gold medal at a Paris Exhibition in 1900. Sales of Berea College crafts reached \$1,500 a year by 1903. In 1911, a swede named Anna Ernberg came to Berea College to develop Fireside Weavers and help raise funds for the Log House Craft Gallery as well as the Sunshine Ballard Cottage which continues to house the weaving department at Berea College (www.berea.edu).

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With the opening of Churchill Weavers, came competition for the college's weaving industry. Churchill Weavers was the first non-college industry in Berea and recognized as the first company to mass produce hand-woven products both nationally and internationally. The college viewed Churchill Weavers as major competition. As expected, Churchill Weavers was viewed as a "factory" and their products not authentic hand weaving due to the use of the fly-shuttle loom. In her final report to the College's president in 1926, Anna Ernberg wrote: "One comparison will show the difference in cost of production. We (Berea College and Churchill Weavers) are both weaving the kinds of scarfs and shawls that women wear these days. On the Churchill looms a girl can make 40 to 50 in a day and she is paid 10 cents apiece. One of our girls can make no more than one in two hours and it is only after a good deal of training that she can do it nice and evenly. She is paid 14 cents to 15 cents per hour. Their scarfs are as a rule, more scanty than ours, but they sell them at as good a price as we ask and claim them to be handwoven." (Alvic)

The criticism of their products caused Churchill Weavers to change their marketing strategies and hurt D.C.'s pride. Churchill Weavers changed their brochure to include a detailed explanation of the weaving process as well as opening the building to tours. The loom room was open to the public to watch the work being done. Until this time, D.C. would not allow others to see his innovations for the fly-shuttle loom. The public was now allowed to view warp preparation, weaving, and fabric finishing.

Weaving centers were started in remote places of the Appalachian Mountains as a way to help women earn money during the early 20th century. Most hand weaving businesses such as the weaving department at Berea College and the weaving centers of Appalachia relied on a plain weave because it is the easiest and quickest weave structure. The design elements consist mostly of interesting yarns and pretty colors. While Churchill Weavers used a plain weave in several of their items, they also used a variety of other more complicated weave structures. Many sought out Churchill Weavers with special requests for a specific design because of the adaptability of the company. This is especially true with regards to the fabric woven for the first astronauts' suits as well as the material used in a major installation piece by the artist Gerhardt Knodel (Alvic).

The Appalachian Mountain weaving centers sold their items through a women's network. In 1928 the Churchill Weavers "Trade Price List" priced scarves from \$1.50 to \$2.40. With standard mark-up for retail, the scarves would sell for \$3.00 to \$4.80. Scarves from the weaving centers sold through the Southern Highland Handicraft Guild sold for \$.60 to \$3.00. It was asserted that Churchill Weavers sold items for less than the mountain weaving centers. Baby blankets produced by the mountain weaving centers in 1933 were sold from \$5.00 to \$8.50. Churchill Weavers was retailing a plain baby blanket at the same time for \$2.75. Their large more elaborate blankets cost as much as \$7.75. Blankets with an embroidered design retailed for \$10.00 (Alvic).

The difference in the success of Churchill Weavers versus the Appalachian Mountain weaving centers and even Berea College is the very aggressive marketing strategy by Churchill Weavers. Eleanor Churchill would load a suitcase filled with her weaving and visit department store buyers in big cities. Unlike the other weavers from the mountain region the Churchill's understood the difference between wholesale pricing and retail pricing. D.C. included with his pricing expenses and profit for wholesale prices, allowing standard mark-up for retail. This allowed marketing to

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department stores and gift shops feasible. The opening of the on-site Churchill Weavers gift shop led to the opening of direct sales stores in Detroit, Chicago, Los Angeles, and New York (Alvic).

History of David Carroll Churchill and Churchill Weavers

Early Years

David Carroll Churchill gained much of his early knowledge from his father, Charles Henry Churchill. As a boy growing up in Oberlin, Ohio and whose father was a well-known intellectual and professor at Oberlin College, David proved to be a curious boy. Much of his boyhood was spent in his father's laboratory aiding his father or tinkering on his own projects. His father, a professor of many subjects at Oberlin College had been named the "Professor of Everything," where he taught subjects from language, physics, mathematics, engineering, music and more. It is evident that with such an intelligent life-long tutor and mentor, D.C. Churchill would be poised to be a brilliant man in his own right. (Chamberlain pg. 24 & 74)

Education and Work at Westinghouse

David Carroll Churchill was born in 1873 and enjoyed tinkering with mechanics ever since he was big enough to do so. In 1899, he graduated from MIT and began work for Westinghouse in 1900 where he first engineered a special wrench to be used for work on gas engines that would be sold to hotels to create electricity when unreliable public power failed. The engineering of the special wrench by Churchill earned him recognition from his employer. Next he helped create a marine-type steam engine to run the New York City subways. These were the first engines to be made from solid steel instead of iron. (Chamberlain pg. 78)

India

D. C. Churchill was interviewed by Rev. Edward Fairbanks, who was exploring ways to solve the economic problem of famine in India. Alice Harding, a missionary with Fairbanks, recommended Churchill, a former classmate. Ms. Harding and Churchill fell in love while attending school, but Alice returned to India after graduation. Churchill answered the call to serve as a missionary in India, marrying Alice Harding on October 3, 1901 while there. As a missionary, D. C. Churchill took over an unused machine shop to train his students at the Sir D. M. Pettit School in Ahmednagar, India. He taught students practical engineering classes (The Churchill Chronicle, pg 3).

During his study of the Indian culture, he found hand-weaving to be the largest industry, after agriculture. The old-fashioned hand looms used by the weavers of India, however, were much less efficient than power looms. Churchill went to the homes to study how the looms were being used by the people of India, analyzing the way the work was completed. He noted a great deal of time was lost due to the breakdown of the loom, and poor processing also slowed down production. The design and function of the loom had hardly been changed since ancient time. He began to closely analyze the loom itself and started working on ways to improve its features. It took him three years to engineer a new loom. He applied Newton's principles of mass and motion to minimize the effects of friction and weight during the loom operation (Chamberlain pg. 81).

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Churchill was able to create the fastest hand loom operating in India. His new loom was demonstrated at an Industrial Exhibit in Bombay in 1904 by the Indian National Congress. He received a gold medal for winning first place in an open competition. The medal is now in the archives of Churchill Weavers with the Kentucky Historical Society. Before leaving India in 1910 on furlough for America, Churchill had founded the American Deccan Institute that contained a hand-weaving shop, carpenter shop, machine shop, blacksmithing and other trades. During World War I, Churchill's American Deccan Institute shop was turned into a munitions factory, charged with making 84,000 mule shackles for General Allenby's Mesopotamia Campaign (Chamberlain pg. 85).

By 1911, Churchill had returned to India and had engineered a new type of loom that could weave up to the speed of a power loom. The new loom allowed 36 people to do the work that formerly required 200 people. The loom was capable of producing 1,000 yards of Gandhi cloth a day. He then introduced a loom with replaceable parts such as new heddles, new reeds, and new shuttles (Chamberlain pg. 84).

Churchill's wife, Alice, died in India in April of 1912. On May 5, 1914, D. C. Churchill had married another missionary teacher in India, Anna Eleanor Franzen. Eleanor was the director of a boy's school (Alvic: 8). In 1917, Churchill returned to America, his sons Alfred and Charles, ready for high school.

Return to America

Upon the return of the Churchills to America, D.C. soon took the position of consulting and aviation engineer at the Garford Manufacturing Company in Elyria, Ohio. His first accomplishment at the Garford plant was the improvement in stabilizers for airplanes (Chamberlain pg. 86). While there, DC also constructed the first satisfactory retractable landing gear for the Kitten III, a World War I biplane that has been preserved at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington. The plane was designed to be an altitude fighter by Captain James V. Martin.

The move to Berea College, KY

In 1920, Churchill left Garford after being invited to Berea College by Dr. William J. Hutchins- a childhood next-door neighbor- who wanted him to start a "Little MIT" for the mountain region. D. C. Churchill agreed to move his family to Kentucky, which would become their permanent home. He took the position as chair of the Physics Department, developing new mechanics courses. It was decided Berea College was not ready for the broad development of the Physics Department. At the end of the 1921-1922 school year, he resigned (The Churchill Chronicle pg. 40).

The founding of Churchill Weavers

Churchill and Eleanor decided to further develop the hand-weaving craft already in the mountain region, hoping to produce fine hand-woven fabrics. Churchill went to work in Berea College's carpenter shop crafting a new fly-shuttle loom. Eleanor became fascinated by weaving. She learned the complete process—setting up the warp, laying out the design, choosing the yarns, colors, and finishes. The Churchills soon discovered they could easily sell their products. A friend of Eleanor's urged the couple to send woven articles north for consignment. They discovered a market for their woven products (Chamberlain pg. 89).

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Eleanor originally set up one of the looms at the Boone Tavern Hotel in Berea (National Register 1996, NRIS 95001527). In a third floor room of the hotel is where she first started designing patterns that would eventually become the product line for Churchill Weavers. D.C. and Eleanor made the decision to build a hand-weaving industrial plant from the ground up. Once the loom house was built, Eleanor was the marketing manager and designer. D.C. supervised production and built the looms. As product manager, Eleanor was able to sell the Churchill Weavers product line to department stores in larger cities—quite a feat for an industrial plant in Berea.

The Churchills trained warpers, winders, finishers, menders, inspectors, loom supervisors, carpenters, mechanics, and weavers. With the starting of the industrial plant, the Churchills were able to bring much-needed jobs to the town of Berea, employing 50 to 150 people. D. C. Churchill continued to make improvements to the fly-shuttle loom for the remainder of his life. The loom itself has been recognized as the best hand loom in existence (Chamberlain pg. 89).

During the first three years of operation, Churchill Weavers reached sales of \$17,000, \$35,000, and \$50,000. Within the first 25 years, Churchill Weavers was grossing over \$500,000 a year. When the operation first began, other hand-weavers would copy traditional patterns. Eleanor Churchill's patterns were original designs that combined colors and textures in new ways (Chamberlain pg. 89).

World War II Efforts and the Invention of Wing Covers

At the age of 72, Churchill once again helped in the war efforts—this time in World War II. In July 1945, he left Berea for Detroit, but didn't make it past Wright Field, in Dayton Ohio, where he applied for a job. He was hired due to his knowledge of physics and textiles. His task was to produce an efficient wing cover. Planes were being grounded at the time in the Aleutians due to ice on the wings. Churchill was able to solve the problem of the covers fitting tightly to the wing. He also developed a quick release system on the underside of the wing, so the cover could be pulled tight. A rope was then left to dangle that could be jerked, allowing the quick release attachments to open within ten seconds. The propellers were then able to blow the wing covers off. The covers could be put on the wings and fastened in twelve minutes by only two men. Churchill spent three years at Wright Field in Dayton, working as a civilian research engineer. During this time, he spent a few weeks in Alaska to test his wing covers under Arctic conditions (Chamberlain pg. 90 and The Churchill Chronicle pg. 7)

Answering the call for space suits

In 1960, Churchill worked on the development of anti-thermal coveralls, worn under a pressurized high altitude suit by the first astronauts. B. F. Goodrich approached Churchill about producing the fabric that would be made of glass and rayon (The Churchill Chronicle pg. 11). The anti-thermal coveralls made by Churchill Weavers are now preserved at the Kentucky Historical Society.

The retirement of D. C. Churchill

D.C. Churchill retired in 1967, after 45 years as president from Churchill Weavers. He was then 93. Upon his retirement, he was voted honorary chairman and his wife Eleanor took over as president. During his 45 years as president of Churchill Weavers, the company has seen many major accomplishments. One such accomplishment was seat covers woven by the weavers of Churchill in 1935 that were used at the Toledo Museum of Art (The Churchill Chronicle pg. 11). In 1969,

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Churchill passed away at the age of 96. Eleanor continued to run Churchill Weavers alone until 1973.

The Bellandos take over Churchill Weavers

Eleanor Churchill chose Lila and Richard Bellando as her successors. The Bellandos worked hard to continue the tradition of Churchill Weavers. It became a tourist destination for visitors to Berea. Products crafted in the loom house of Churchill Weavers were shipped all over the world.

Crown Crafts buys Churchill Weavers

Churchill Weavers was sold to Crown Crafts of Atlanta Georgia in 1996 by the Bellandos. The agreement was made with Crown Crafts that the company would still be operated by Lila and Richard Bellando. The Bellandos made the decision to sell the company to Crown Crafts in order for their employees to receive benefits that they could not offer them. With this agreement also came corporate expertise and additional resources for production. Churchill Weavers permanently closed its doors in 2007, unable to compete with foreign producers (The Churchill Chronicle pg. 16). The Churchill building remained empty from 2007 until 2013, when Bill and Mary Ann West bought the building from Crown Crafts.

Evaluation of Significance of Churchill Weavers within the context

Among its many achievements was seat covers woven by the weavers of Churchill in 1935 that were used at the Toledo Museum of Art (The Churchill Chronicle pg. 11). The most recent well known achievement of Churchill Weavers is their work with Gerhardt Knodel, a world renowned fiber designer, for an eight-story high fiber piece called "Free Fall" used as a focal point in the Renaissance Center of Detroit, Michigan in 1977 (The Churchill Chronicle pg. 14). A few awards won by Churchill Weavers in the years preceding its closure include the prestigious ARTS Award for Manufacturer of the Year in home textiles in 1998. Churchill Weavers won the Portman TOP Award in Atlanta for Best New Design in 1997. In 2001, Churchill Weavers received a Life Member Award from the Southern Highland Craft Guild. In March 2002, they were given The Kentucky Crafted Emeritus Award for recognition of their dedication to personal craft development and their exemplary level of accomplishments as well as the Booth Award for Best of Show at the Kentucky Craft Market (The Churchill Chronicle pg. 14).

Evaluation of the Integrity between the Churchill Weavers' Historic Context in Light of its Current Material Condition

The Churchill Weavers building has integrity of **location** because it has not been moved.

The Churchill Weavers Building has integrity of **association**. It was used as the first non-college industry to bring jobs to the mountain region. As demand for woven items increased so did the size of the building. Each time an addition was made, more looms were added and more jobs created. D.C. Churchill continued to work on and make improvements to his fly-shuttle loom making the weaving process less strenuous on the weaver. Before closing its doors, Churchill Weavers was a must see tourist stop in Berea, Kentucky. Year after year travelers would stop in to take a tour and to

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visit the gift shop. In addition to becoming a tourist stop, Churchill Weavers was different from other weavers of the mountain region as Churchill was sold in major department stores across the nation. A feat that was mostly unheard of at this time. The property retains its industrial character to this day even though it has been both added on to and left vacant for several years.

The Churchill Weavers Building has integrity of **design** as it is what you would expect to see of an old industrial building. Ranging from the pine wood floors, vaulted ceiling with exposed wooden beams, to the walls lined with windows for ventilation and light. The only modern addition present is the concrete block and metal addition built in 2003. The rest of the building structure maintains its brick, concrete block and asbestos siding. The gift shop added to the building in 1954 still has the wood siding, but has been painted several times over the years for upkeep.

The Churchill Weavers Building has integrity of **materials** because it is mostly untouched from the brick, concrete block, and asbestos siding to the pinewood floors throughout the older parts of the building. This also includes the windows lining the walls that are typical of an old industrial building. Churchill Weavers has remained relatively unchanged other than the addition made in 2003 and the updates made to the gift shop area, such as making it larger and painting the store front outside.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

Alvic, Philis

2004 "Churchill Weavers 80 Years of American Handweaving" conference paper, Textile Society of America, Symposium Proceedings, University of Nebraska, Lincoln. January 1, 2004. Accessed on the internet at <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1428&context=tsaconf> on July 4, 2013

Bellando , R., & Bellando, L. (2012, June 26). Churchill Weavers. (D. West, Interviewer)

Bellando, R. (2002). *The Churchill Chronicle*. Berea: Churchwill Weavers .

Chamberlain, E. B. (1965). *The Churchills of Oberlin*. Oberlin: The Oberlin Improvement and Development Organization.

www.berea.edu/student-crafts/students-at-work-2/

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 # _____
 recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

State Historic Preservation Office
 Other State agency
 Federal agency
 Local government
 University
 Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): MA-B-79

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10. Geographical Data

Acreege of Property 3.5

UTM References

Berea quad

Coordinates calculated by ArcGIS Explorer

Coordinates according to NAD 83: Zone 16; Easting 740 125.00; Northing 4162 484.49

Coordinates according to NAD 27:

1	<u>16</u>	<u>740 130.94</u>	<u>4162 279.93</u>	3	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing
2	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>	4	<u></u>	<u></u>	<u></u>
	Zone	Easting	Northing		Zone	Easting	Northing

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

The parcel of land that is occupied by the building that was once Churchill Weaver's, Inc. encompasses 3.5 acres of land in the shape that resembles a water drop. Once turning onto Churchill Drive, the beginning point starts after approximately ten feet after turning. The property follows the right of way leading to the West side of the property which is lined off with a bush and tree line. By following the tree line down on the West side, you will find the end of the property where in backs up onto the 9th green of the Berea Country Club golf course and the begins to go back towards the Northern front of the property at the start of the back end of the East side tree line. At the end of the tree line on the East side in the front, the property line curves at a North West direction towards the North entry where this property boundary description started, which was at the start of Churchill Drive where the property boundary begins. See attached map.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

The property proposed for inclusion on the National Register by the current nomination includes the 3.5 acre parcel associated with the Churchill Weavers, Inc. This nominated property retains the historic industrial building which encompasses 56,000 square feet using multiple levels and a detached building that was also used by Churchill Weavers, Inc. The proposed boundaries provide an appropriate setting for understanding the significance of Churchill Weavers, Inc. as the first non-college industry in Berea, Kentucky and within the larger context of being recognized as one of the national leaders in hand-weaving.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Sheri Miller and Dee West
organization Millstone, LLC date 6/23/13
street & number 100 Churchill Drive telephone 859-358-4206
city or town Berea State KY zip code 40403
e-mail Williamdeewest.ky@gmail.com

Photographs:

Name of Property: Churchill Weavers, Inc.
City or Vicinity: Berea
County: Madison **State:** Kentucky
Photographer: Dee West
Date Photographed: April 20, 2013 (unless noted otherwise)

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Description of Photograph(s) and number:

1 of 33: Front view of Churchill Weavers as seen from Churchill Drive, labeled I on plat.
Camera Direction: South

2 of 33: Front view of Churchill Weavers as seen from Churchill Drive, labeled I on plat.
Camera Direction: West

3 of 33: Front view of Churchill Weavers as seen from Churchill Drive, labeled 1 on plat.
Camera Direction: East

4 of 33: View of northern side, labeled 1 on plat, with II and III in background.
Camera Direction: South

5 of 33: View from the middle of building, viewing I, II and III on plat.
Camera Direction: South West

6 of 33: View from middle of building, viewing II and III on plat.
Camera Direction: South West

7 of 33: View from middle of building, viewing III on plat.
Camera Direction: West

8 of 33: View from middle of building, viewing III, IV and VI on plat.
Camera Direction: West

9 of 33: View of side of building at Southern end, viewing VI on plat.
Camera Direction: West

10 of 33: View of side of building at Southern end, viewing VI on plat.
Camera Direction: West

11 of 33: View from the back South end, viewing VI in foreground and V in background on plat.
Camera Direction: North West

12 of 33: View from the back South end, viewing V on plat.
Camera Direction: North West

13 of 33: View from back favoring the South West side, viewing back and side of V on plat.
Camera Direction: North

14 of 33: View of South West side of building, viewing V on plat.
Camera Direction: North East

15 of 33: View of South West side of building, viewing V and IV on plat.
Camera Direction: South

16 of 33: View of middle on the West side, viewing IV in foreground and III on right on plat.
Camera Direction: South East

17 of 33: View of middle of the West side, viewing IV and III on plat.
Camera Direction: East

18 of 33: View of middle of the West side, viewing III on plat.
Camera Direction: East

19 of 33: View of the West side of building favoring the Northern end, viewing III, II and I on plat.
Camera Direction: North East

20 of 33: View of North West side, viewing III and II on plat.
Camera Direction East

21 of 33: View of the front on the West side, viewing I on plat.
Camera Direction: East

22 of 33: View of inside in the middle showing both floor and truss system in ceiling, from IV on plat. (Taken on 4/13/13)

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Camera Direction: West

23 of 33: View of inside in the middle of building showing floor, dumbwaiter and ceiling from III on plat. (Taken on 4/13/13)
Camera Direction: North

24 of 33: View of "saw tooth" ceiling inside of II on plat. (Taken on 4/13/13)
Camera Direction: North

25 of 33: View of South West end from the inside, viewing V on plat. (Taken on 3/17/13)
Camera Direction: South

26 of 33: View of South West end on lower level from the inside, viewing V on plat.
Camera Direction: South

27 of 33: View of boiler room, located in basement, viewing III on plat.
Camera Direction: East

28 of 33: View of D.C. Churchill's office located in basement, viewing IV on plat. (Taken on 4/10/13)
Camera Direction: South East

29 of 33: View of detached building from the side, viewing VII on plat.
Camera Direction: East

30 of 33: View of detached building from the Southern end, viewing VII on plat.
Camera Direction: North East

31 of 33: View of detached building from the Southern end, viewing VII on plat.
Camera Direction: West

32 of 33: View of detached building from the side, viewing VII on plat. (Taken on 3/31/13)
Camera Direction: South West

33 of 33: View of detached building from the Northern End, viewing VII on plat. (Taken on 3/31/13)
Camera Direction: East

Property Owner:

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

name Bill and Mary Ann West
street & number 754 South Dogwood telephone 859-358-4206
city or town Berea state KY zip code 40403

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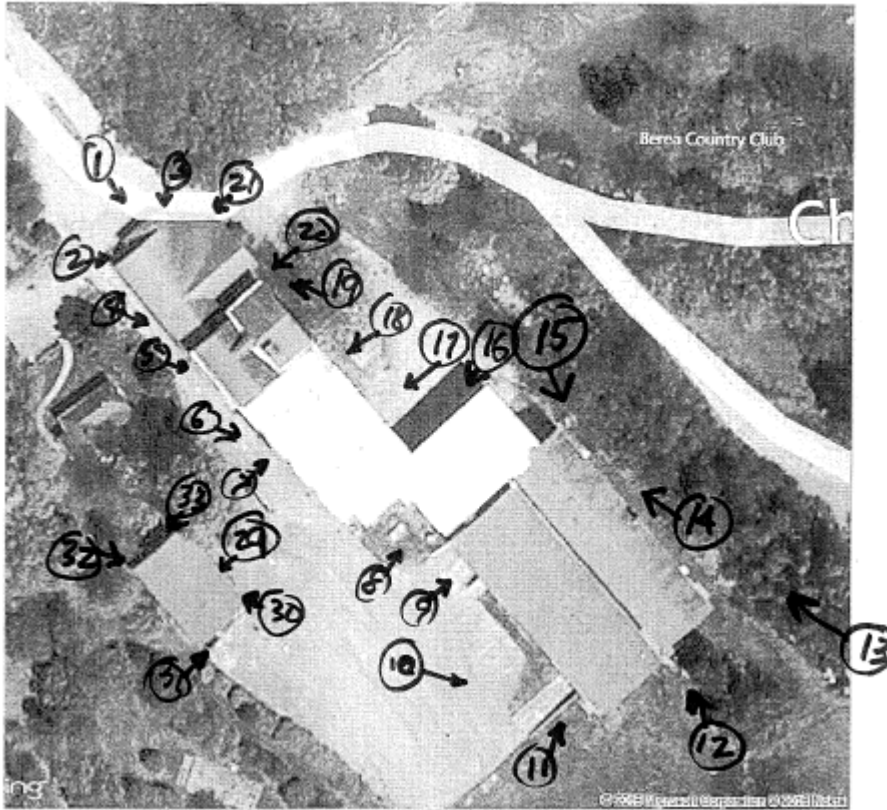


Photo Identification Map (Photo # in upper left-hand area of photo)



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