

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Lorillard Snuff Mill

AND/OR COMMON

Old Snuff Mill

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER On Bronx River, .3 mi. north of U.S. 1
New York Botanical Garden

__NOT FOR PUBLICATION 18
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN

Bronx

__ VICINITY OF

STATE

New York

CODE

36

COUNTY

Bronx

CODE

005

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

New York Botanical Garden

Contact: Dr. Howard S. Irwin
President, N.Y. Botanical
Garden, Bronx, N.Y. 10458

STREET & NUMBER

Bronx Park

CITY, TOWN

Bronx

__ VICINITY OF

New York

STATE

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Recorder's Office

STREET & NUMBER

Bronx County

CITY, TOWN

Bronx

STATE

New York

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

New York Landmarks Preservation Commission
Historic Sites Survey (New York Botanical Gardens)

DATE

1966; 1967

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

N.Y. Landmarks Preservation Commission; Historical Sites Sur.

CITY, TOWN

New York; Washington

STATE

N.Y.; D.C.

501

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Lorillard Snuff Mill is a 2 1/2-story, rectangular-shaped, gable-roofed, fieldstone structure with a full basement that is exposed on three sides. It faces eastward on a north-south axis and rests on the sloping east bank of the Bronx River in a largely wooded section of the New York Botanical Garden. The building was erected about 1840, apparently on or near the site of two previous Lorillard snuff mills, and it formed part of a complex of structures that included not only other tobacco-related buildings but also, after 1856, the Lorillard family mansion and its supporting structures.

For at least 30 years the P. Lorillard Company manufactured snuff in the mill, the basement of which housed huge grindstones turned by water from the Bronx River. In 1870 the company opened a giant new plant across the Hudson River in New Jersey and apparently ceased production in the Bronx mill at that time. It remained part of the Lorillard estate, though, until 1884, when the City of New York purchased 661 acres of the family property.

For a time the old mill served as the 41st Precinct Police Station and later as a carpentry shop for Bronx Park. The Lorillard machinery and water mill remained in the historic structure until about 1900, however. In 1915 the Park Department gave the mill and other Lorillard buildings to the New York Botanical Garden. Following renovation and repair work, the mansion, which was destroyed by fire only 8 years later, housed the Bronx Society of Arts and Sciences, the Horticultural Society of New York, and various offices and functions of the New York Botanical Garden. The mill continued to serve as a carpentry shop.

In the 1950's, Mrs. Harold I. Pratt, a member of the Garden's Board of Managers, joined with the Garden, the P. Lorillard Company, and the City of New York to furnish nearly \$300,000 for restoration of the mill as a public restaurant and Garden meeting place. The west side of the basement, or riverside, level underwent considerable alteration, but elsewhere the original exterior facades were carefully retained. In the basement area the Garden installed a modern snackbar and cafeteria, removed most of the west wall to make room for seven large floor-to-ceiling doors and windows, and added a stone terrace that extended the full length of the mill. Brick buttresses were added between the seven bays for support. Inside, hidden steel beams were installed to help carry the weight of the building. Most of the main-and-second-floor space was left unpartitioned to serve respectively as a meeting hall and Garden laboratory. These rooms have new wood floors but display their original wood ceiling joists and support posts and braces, as well as recessed windows with wood sills and lintels. Interestingly, on both floors the center ceiling joists retain portions of the large wooden U-bolts that apparently held

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(continued)

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1840-70 (1792-1870) BUILDER/ARCHITECT P. Lorillard Company

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Erected about 1840 to replace a similar structure, the Lorillard Snuff Mill is the oldest extant tobacco factory in the United States. It was built by the P. Lorillard Company, which, according to businessman-scholar Robert K. Heimann, "is the Nation's oldest tobacco Manufacturer."¹ Consequently the mill is outstandingly symbolic of an important American industry founded largely on the cultivation of a major staple. Tobacco served as the colonies' first principal export, paved the way for the utilization of slave labor, stood second only to cotton among American exports as late as 1860, and accounted for almost \$24 million annually in U.S. foreign trade in the mid-1890's.

The P. Lorillard Company survived longer and gained, in the view of respected tobacco historian Nannie May Tilley, a place among the "best-established tobacco manufacturers in the United States," because it succeeded in keeping up with the evolution of tobacco use.² From the colonial era, when snuff was the most popular form of tobacco, through the successive crazes for plugs, cigars, and cigarettes, "changes in the national taste were mirrored," says Heimann, "by Lorillard's changing product mix."³ In addition, notes Heimann, "Lorillard had a head start into the era of mass-produced national brands," which began after the Civil War.⁴ The firm's plugs--Climax, Sailor's Delight, Catawba, Red Cross, Green Turtle, and Army and Navy--were not as well known as W. T. Blackwell's Bull Durham would be later, but they enjoyed wide distribution during the 1870's, when Lorillard's Jersey City plant alone accounted for nearly 10 percent of all tobacco products manufactured in the United States.

The Lorillard Snuff Mill is a 2 1/2-story, rectangular-shaped, gable-roofed, fieldstone structure with a full basement that is exposed on three sides. It faces eastward on a north-south axis and rests on the sloping east bank of the Bronx River in a largely wooded section of

(continued)

¹Robert K. Heimann, Tobacco and Americans (New York, 1960), 65.

²Nannie May Tilley, The Bright-Tobacco Industry, 1860-1929 (Chapel Hill, 1948), 551.

³Heimann, Tobacco and Americans, 193.

⁴Ibid.

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9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Bining, Arthur Cecil, and Thomas C. Cochran, The Rise of American Economic Life, 4th ed. (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1964).

Cox, Reavis, Competition in the American Tobacco Industry, 1911-1932: A Study of the Effects of the Partition of the American Tobacco Company by the United States Supreme Court (New York: Columbia University Press, 1933).

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY circa 8 acres

(continued)

UTM REFERENCES

A	18	59,458.0	4,523,367.0	B	18	59,474.0	4,523,690
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C	18	59,474.0	4,523,520	D	18	59,456.0	4,523,490
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

(See last page of description.)

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

George R. Adams, Director, Historic Landmarks Project

ORGANIZATION

American Association for State and Local History

DATE

December 1976

STREET & NUMBER

1400 Eighth Avenue South

TELEPHONE

615-242-5583

CITY OR TOWN

Nashville, Tennessee

STATE

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

TITLE

DATE

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FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
ATTEST

DATE

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
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grindstone shafts. The northern third of the second floor has been converted into two apartments for Garden personnel; the attic, which remains unfinished, serves as a storage area.

Originally the seven-bay-long, three-bay-wide mill had a window or door in each bay, with the possible exception of the western basement facade. Today the center bay at the first-floor and basement levels of each end are bricked, and on the basement level of the north end the westernmost bay is closed with plywood, while the easternmost bay has a small, square-shaped, one-story, fieldstone extension that was added in the 1950's to house modern heating equipment. All other mill bays retain their original doors or 12-over-12 sash windows. Except for the double, center door in the first-story east facade, all openings have stepped, brick architraves and segmental arches with radiating brick voussoirs. In addition to the double, center door, which has a flat, brick arch and an eight-light transom, a single door near each end of the front facade and another on the north end also provide access to the building's interior. All doors are white-painted wood. The mill has an interior, brick chimney at each end, but no fireplace remains. Stone quoins complete the exterior decor.

Boundary justification: The boundary of the designated property includes the mill and approximately 8 surrounding acres that are essential to preservation of the mill in what remains of its historic setting on the Bronx River. Fortunately an embankment within the easternmost edge of the designated area and a wooded ridge within the westernmost edge of the designated area provide the mill some degree of isolation from other park structures.

Boundary description: As indicated in red on the accompanying maps [(1) U.S.G.S., 7.5' Series, N.Y.-N.J., Central Park Quad., 1966; and (2) AASLH Sketch Map, 1976], a line beginning at the junction of the east bank of the Bronx River with its east-west park access-road bridge, about 150 south of the mill, and extending eastward approximately 150 feet along the left curb of said access road to an unmarked point approximately 300 feet due south of a New York Botanical Garden nursery; thence, due north about 600 feet, passing along the westernmost extent of the nursery and its support buildings, to the east bank of the Bronx River; thence, due west across the river and approximately 500 feet to the eastern edge of a north-south park access road; thence, southward approximately 650 feet along the eastern edge of said road to its junction with the above-noted east-west park access road; thence, eastward about 400 feet along the left curb of the east-west park access road and across the river to the point of beginning. (507)

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the New York Botanical Garden. The building underwent restoration in the 1950's, and while considerably altered inside, it retains much of its open interior space and its original exposed ceiling joists. The exterior of the structurally sound building is little altered and presents a fine example of an early 18th-century industrial edifice.

History

Over the years tobacco has had a significant economic and social impact upon the Nation. Early in the 17th century "the filthy weed" became the American colonists first major export. It remained the chief staple of the agricultural South until well after the Revolution and ranked first among U.S. exports as late as 1790. Production declined near the end of the 18th century but spurted ahead again after 1820, and by 1860 exports of tobacco ranked second only to those of cotton. Thirty years later, in 1890, tobacco accounted for nearly \$24 million annually in American foreign trade. Meanwhile early cultivation of tobacco paved the way for successful utilization of slave labor, and in every generation a sizeable number of people used the weed habitually in one form or another.

More than any other extant structure the Lorillard Snuff Mill symbolizes this historic role of tobacco in American social and economic life. The building is the oldest extant tobacco factory in the country, and the P. Lorillard Company is the oldest tobacco manufacturing firm. From its inception in 1760 until the present, it has ranked among the leaders in the industry, and at one time or another the company has turned out every kind of product from snuff to cigarettes. The firm "reflect[s]," says Heimann, "in every era, the 200-year evolution of American tobacco manufacturing."⁵

Pierre Lorillard, a young French Huguenot immigrant, started the company in New York in 1760. In a small Manhattan mill he ground snuff from Virginia tobacco and apparently originated the idea of packaging the product in animal bladders tanned and dried like parchment. Snuffing had first become fashionable in Great Britain and the colonies in the late 17th century, but the next century was "the great age of snuff."⁶ For a time most snuff in the colonies came from Britain, but several small mills sprang up in Virginia in the 1730's. These were followed by at least one in Rhode Island in 1750 and then by the Lorillard factory. The earliest known Lorillard advertisement, dated May 1785, shows that the firm tried to identify with

⁵Ibid., 194.

⁶Ibid., 64.

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the Virginia tobacco region by depicting an Indian holding a pipe and leaning against a hogshed marked "Best Virginia." The advertisement also offered what surely must be one of the earliest money-back guarantees of good quality.

When Pierre Lorillard was killed in the Revolutionary War, his sons George and Pierre II took charge of the company. In 1792 they moved their main factory north of the city to a site on the Bronx River, where they bought 50 acres, a grist mill and other buildings, water rights, and a dam. They adapted the mill to snuff manufacturing, using the river flow to turn fine grinding stones. About 1800 they added more acreage and replaced the frame mill with a new one of native fieldstone. It, in turn, was replaced with the present mill structure about 1840. Later purchases expanded the Lorillards' Bronx River holdings to hundreds of acres, and in 1856 Pierre III built a 45-room mansion on the property.

New York has historically ranked among the top half dozen tobacco manufacturing centers in the Nation, and during much of the Lorillards' first four decades on the Bronx River, the State trailed only Virginia in total production. That Virginia's output trebled New York's does not diminish tobacco manufacturing authority Joseph Clarke Robert's assessment of the Lorillards as "the greatest of the New York City manufacturers in the period between the Revolution and the Civil War."⁷

P. Lorillard and Company, under the management of Pierre III after 1843, continued to market snuff for years but did not fail to capitalize on the newest fads in tobacco use. According to Robert, "the chief method of tobacco consumption during the first half of the nineteenth century was chewing."⁸ In 1870 the company opened a new giant factory in Jersey City and gained what Heimann calls "a head start into the era of mass-produced national brands."⁹ By the end of the decade the Jersey City plant accounted for almost 10 percent of all tobacco products manufactured in the United States, and the firm's plugs--Climax, Sailor's Delight, Catawba, Red Cross, Green Turtle, and Army and Navy--enjoyed wide distribution. Smoking tobacco and cigars increased in popularity during the postbellum years too. The Lorillard brands included Union Leader and Sensation in the former category and Sweet Moments, Old Virginia Cheroots, Lillian Russell, and later Muriel, in the latter category.

⁷ Joseph Clarke Robert, The Story of Tobacco in America (Chapel Hill, 1949), 80.

⁸ Ibid., 103.

⁹ Heimann, Tobacco and Americans, 193.

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Lorillard
Snuff Mill

8 three

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In the late 1880's and the 1890's, the P. Lorillard Company entered, along with the other major manufacturers, into a heated trade war in plug tobacco, and it ended with Lorillard becoming a part of the James B. Duke tobacco trust. For a time Lorillard, Liggett and Myers, and Drummond were the chief plug producers, but by about 1893 Duke's newly formed American Tobacco Company had entered the competition and garnered 20 percent of the national plug market. The huge combination already controlled 90 percent of the cigarette market and had almost 10 percent of the smoking tobacco sales, and soon it succeeded in buying out most of its remaining competitors, including Lorillard. The historic New York firm remained under Lorillard family management but formed part of the American Tobacco Company until 1911, when the U.S. Supreme Court declared it to be in violation of antitrust laws and ordered its reorganization.

The P. Lorillard Company emerged as one of the Nation's top four tobacco manufacturers, along with the new American Tobacco Company, Liggett and Myers, and R. J. Reynolds Tobacco Company. Although it lost its snuff brands in the reorganization, Lorillard retained its plug, fine-cut chewing, smoking tobacco, and cigarette brands. During the next 15 years, while the other producers brought out new brands with new blends of tobacco, Lorillard continued to concentrate on Turkish cigarette brands, which included Mogul, Murad, and Helmar. Then in 1926 the firm introduced Old Gold cigarettes. Due in part to an advertising campaign that featured John Held flappers, pretty girls, and a blindfold, taste test, the new brand earned five percent of U.S. cigarette sales by 1937, enabling Lorillard to retain its position among the leading tobacco companies and to continue to reflect all phases of the history of American tobacco manufacturing.



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