

PH0505595

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	OCT 4 1977
DATE ENTERED	FEB 8 1978

**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 J. C. Barron Flour Mill

AND/OR COMMON

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER Directly east of the former Northern Pacific Railroad tracks
at the corner of First and Jackson Streets.

CITY, TOWN Oakesdale VICINITY OF 5th - Thomas S. Foley
STATE Washington CODE 53 COUNTY Whitman CODE 075

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER: No

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Joseph Barron

STREET & NUMBER Post Office Box 14

CITY, TOWN Oakesdale VICINITY OF STATE Washington

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Assessor's Office, Whitman County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Colfax STATE Washington

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE The Washington State Inventory of Historic Places

DATE 1974-1975 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS The Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission

CITY, TOWN Olympia STATE Washington

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input 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 rough, sawed timber framed J. C. Barron Flour Mill stands three and one-half stories in height in the northern portion of the small farming community of Oakesdale. The entire flour mill building is a composite of four semi-detached structures. They are: the flour mill proper (1890), former steam generating plant (1890), crib elevator (1898) and a grain and flour warehouse (circa 1890). The rectangular-shaped adjuncts to the milling operation were erected as wings to the mill proper and, as such, yield an irregular-shaped plan to the entirety.

The mill proper rests on a foundation of stretcher bond brick which was manufactured in Oakesdale. The crib elevator, originally on wood piers, is now supported by a concrete foundation laid by J. C. Barron soon after his purchase of the property. The warehouse and the steam plant rest on wooden sills. Exterior siding is seven and one-half inch rustic shiplap. Flooring for the mill proper is fir. The original cedar shingles of the roof have been replaced with both composition shingles in part and by galvanized steel in part. The original paint, red with white trim, has been covered with white paint, now deteriorating.

To the immediate west of the mill run spur tracks of the former Northern Pacific Railroad to the immediate north and east run spur tracks of the former Spokane and Inland Railroad

The crib elevator extends 50 feet from the east face of the mill proper and is 40 feet in width. At the west end of the building on the ground floor is a nine feet wide driveway. A pit beneath the driveway and a floor designed for dumping grain allow for unloading grain from farm wagons. The pit drains into a belt-and-cup elevator which transports the wheat to the top of the building for distribution to the eight flat-bottom bins, three small hopper-bottom bins and the two grain cleaners. The capacity of each flat-bottom bin is 2,500 bushels. Heavy wooden ramps extend 20 feet from the exterior walls to the ground north and south of the interior driveway. Two exterior wooden sliding doors, running the full height of the first story, provide access to the driveway from the exterior on the south. On the north is a similar pair of doors, one sliding and one hinged to the east facade of the mill proper.

Although portions of the first floor level of the elevator have been remodeled since 1898 the original eight by twelve inch support posts are still in place, as are many of the original wooden spouts which provide for gravity drainage from the overhead bins. The original four flat-bottom bins have been divided to form the current eight bins. A smaller, exterior sliding door is centrally located on the east face, providing access to a twelve by twenty-three feet exterior scale. A small, single story, irregular-shaped gable roofed head house projects centrally above the roof at the west end of the elevator. The enclosure contains the upper portions of the belt-and-cup conveyor. Three windows are located as needed.

The single story grain warehouse at the north of the mill proper measures 65 by 36 feet. The framing members are 36 feet long beams joined with mortise, tenon and wooden pegs. A gable roof is covered with worn composition shingles. The original vertical board and batten siding is covered on the north and west facades with galvanized steel. A large, recessed, rectangular wooden exterior sliding door and two, double hung windows are centrally located facing north. A smaller, but similar door may be found at the west end of the warehouse. These doors were placed to facilitate loading rail cars and

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wagons with the finished flour, which was stored in cloth sacks in the building. Access from the flour mill proper is provided by a large doorway at the east end of the south facade of the warehouse. Because of a difference in floor height, a rampway provides a continuous surface between the two parts of the flour mill building.

The one and one-half story steam plant is 40 feet wide and extends 50 feet to the south of the mill proper. Cornice boxed eaves and verges project two feet. The roof is a medium gable pitch. A number and variety of old windows and doors appear around the wing. Direct access to the mill proper from the steam plant, used since 1907 as an apartment, is via a doorway between the ground floor of the steam plant and the basement of the mill. Other openings between the two structures once accommodated the long, wide drive belt, but have since been sealed.

The flour mill itself measures 40 by 68 feet. Double hung, four pane windows are spaced regularly along the north, west and south facades. Basement windows are 14 inches above the ground and are slightly smaller than the otherwise similar upper windows. Lugsills and entablature characterize the exterior window mouldings.

A long, round, metal spout projects downward from the upper north facade and was used to load grain into Spokane and Inland Railroad cars.

A large, double, vertical plain wooden door is centrally located in the west facade on each of the top three floors. A large beam extends several feet beyond the structure above the center of the uppermost door. By means of a pulley secured to the west end of the beam, heavy machinery can be brought into or removed from the building.

Two straight stairways -- one leading to the basement and one leading to the second floor, are located along the south facade on the first floor. A number of nine by nine inch posts are spaced regularly on the floor and support the twelve by twelve inch, 40 feet long ceiling joists. Jointing is mortise and tenon with wooden pegging. A small electrical control room, an interior alteration, is found in the southwest corner. Near the southeast corner is the flour mill office. A twenty-one by seven and one-half feet room, it contains four windows of varying sizes. A stretcher bond brick chimney terminates below the ceiling on the east wall. The floor is covered with linoleum and the original furniture is in place.

Machinery on the first floor includes four sacking machines, two for flour and two for livestock feeds; a small stone buhr mill (dated 1871); four double stands of roller mills; a feed governing device for the first break roll; a feed mixer and a Carter disc cleaning machine. The roller mills contain seven by twenty inch cylindrical rollers and were among the first to employ ball bearings, circa 1909. In addition, one roller mill for livestock feeds is located at the east end and is powered by a small motor. Of these machines only the stone buhr is still in use. Originally for the manufacture of graham flour, the device is now occasionally employed for milling corn. A wooden trunk exhaust system and numerous wooden spouts connecting machines on the upper and lower floors are also located on the first floor.

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Twelve feet above the first floor is the second floor. The northwest corner functioned as a workshop. Various tools and benches remain in place. The northeast corner contains the straight stairway to the third floor. Four small, hopper-bottom wooden bins are located near the center of the building, directly above the four roller mills. Machinery includes reel sifters; a purifier, used to separate germ from the other parts of the wheat grain and a cyclone dust collector. The dust collector stretches to the ceiling, contains a number of cloth filters and dates from before the mill was purchased by J. C. Barron. Other small bins, a water storage tank and an exhaust fan may be found on this level. The drive shaft for the second floor machinery is near the ceiling, suspended by hangars. On the second floor of the elevator wing is a seed treating machine.

The third floor contains a flour bleaching device; wheat scourer; bran duster; tubular dust collector; two flour agitators and a large plan sifter. Many parts of the sifter contain small, porcelain knobs. Two cleaners -- one a cylinder type and one a sieve type, are located in the elevator wing. Access to the tops of the elevator bins as well as the narrow stairs to the head house are located on the third floor.

Additional machinery found on the basement level includes a small hammer mill, added during the 1930's; livestock feed scalper; wheat washer-dryer; 15 horse-power motor; water pump for the wheat washing process and a number of wooden grain augers.

The predominant power for the milling operation came from a 30 horsepower electric motor in the basement. The motor turned a long, ten inches wide, double ply drive belt. The main belt turned a long drive shaft which powered, via leather belts, the machines located on the floor. Additional belts served to transfer power to the long, east-west oriented drive shafts on each of the upper floors.

The various machines and bins of the flour mill are connected by a number of square-shaped, clear-grained, beaded fir gravity chutes, manifesting a high degree of craftsmanship. The spouts are lined with metal and most have been finished with shellac.

Alterations since the 1890's have been few. Among the more significant are: interior changes in the steam plant wing; addition of an electrical control room in the mill proper reroofing and repainting; addition of an east-facing, exterior scale; dividing the original four elevator wing bins; partial ground floor remodeling of the elevator wing and residing of the north and west facades of the warehouse.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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 1890 and 1898 BUILDER/ARCHITECT J. G. Porter

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The town of Oakesdale was established in the mid-1880's by James McCoy and was for several years little more than a small farming village. Among the first significant commercial enterprises was the flour mill built by J. G. Porter during the late summer and autumn of 1890. With the completion of a Northern Pacific Railroad spur track to the mill building in early December, the mill was running and flour was being produced on contract to local farmers and merchants.

When virtually every other frame commercial building in Oakesdale was razed in the fire of July 5, 1892, the flour mill miraculously escaped unscathed. By the mid-1890's the Oakesdale Milling Company, then the name, had gained reputation for producing one of the Pacific Northwest's finest flours. In December of 1895 with J. A. Henry as the miller, the operation was running 24 hours per day. Wheat to be ground into flour was brought in from as far away as Genesee, Idaho. Although a prospering mill, the output was kept small, with a daily capacity of 80 barrels (at 196 pounds per barrel).

To store grain for flour production a crib elevator was appended to the east face of the mill in 1898. The capacity of the four wooden bins was 20,000 bushels of wheat.

Throughout the late 1890's, however, and until 1907, the mill was characterized by financial problems. As well as frequent changes of ownership -- including a sheriff's sale of the mill in 1897 and the temporary closing of the mill early in 1898, a number of liens and mortgages were made against the property. This trend ended with the February 1907 sale of the mill to Joseph C. Barron.

Just prior to 1907 the power supply was changed from the original steam to electricity. At the time of the purchase of the flour mill by J. C. Barron, the steam plant wing of the building was altered to accommodate residential use, which has continued until 1974. For the past three years the steam plant has been vacant.

Various pieces of milling equipment were added or updated throughout the 1890's and the early 1900's, leaving the mill with a composite of variously manufactured machines in addition to the basic roller mills. All of these pieces remain in excellent condition.

Joseph C. Barron (1866-1955) was a second generation miller, his father having operated a water-driven grist mill in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. Although a student of the ministry, J. C. Barron fell back upon milling during the late 1880's and operated flouring operations in Crawfordsville, Indiana and in Asotin, Washington before coming to Oakesdale.

Barron successfully ran the Oakesdale flour mill for over 30 years, contributing significantly to the economic stability of the town. During the 1920's the enterprise was expanded to include the coal business. Several coal sheds, dating from this period, stand east of

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Abstract of Title Number 1039, (Whitman Abstract Company, pp. 1-10).

Barron, Joseph, "The Barrons and the Flour Mill," in Oakesdale Memories, ed. by Oakesdale Alpha Study Club, (unlisted publisher, 1976).

(see attached sheet)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than one

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 1	4 8 1 7 2 0	5 2 1 9 4 5 0
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C			

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Tract AX in South half of Section 22, Township 19, Range 44

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

Nicholas J. Manning

ORGANIZATION

Whitman County Historical Society

DATE

May 10, 1977

STREET & NUMBER

P. O. Box 95

TELEPHONE

635-3891

CITY OR TOWN

Garfield

STATE

Washington

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Janice M. Welch

TITLE

Acting State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

September 27, 1977

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHITECTURE AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

W. H. ...

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

2-8-78

ATTEST:

Charles ...

DATE

2-7-78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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the mill and are in the process of being permanently dismantled.

One of the last operating flour mills in Whitman County, the J. C. Barron Flour Mill went out of business in 1939, unable to successfully compete with larger, interstate mills. At the time of World War II the grain storage and cleaning portions of the mill building were once again employed. This use continued for several years after the end of the war.

The mill building, the last such structure extant in Whitman County, is currently owned by Joseph Barron, a son of J. C. Barron. Mr. Barron operates a small-scale milling business elsewhere in Oakesdale, but is called upon occasionally to utilize several of the smaller machines in the old mill. The J. C. Barron Flour Mill stands essentially as it appeared while in operation; no machinery or other milling accessories have been removed or altered. The mill office, in fact, remains intact with the original desk, chairs and safe.

The J. C. Barron Flour Mill, with both an unaltered late-Nineteenth-Century exterior and interior, stands as a rare glimpse of a local industry typical of those which played a significant role in the economic history of eastern Washington. The building is a vivid reminder of an era of small, thriving flour mills, which were once located throughout Washington's Inland Empire.

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The Spokane Falls Review, (Spokane, Washington), August 3, November 25,
December 25, 1890.

The Spokesman Review, (Spokane, Washington), December 11, 1895, March 4, 1898.

The Weekly Commoner, (Colfax, Washington), January 25, 1907.