

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**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 William J. Fowler Mill and House
and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number Sweetwater Road N/A not for publication
city, town Eve Mills N/A vicinity of ~~XXXXXXXXXXXX~~
state Tennessee code 047 county Monroe code 123

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> religious
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Rhea Ghormley Alexander
street & number Fowler's Mill Road, Route 4
city, town Loudon N/A vicinity of state Tennessee 37774

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Register of Deeds, Monroe County Courthouse
street & number Public Square
city, town Madisonville state Tennessee 37354

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title N/A has this property been determined eligible? yes no
date N/A N/A federal state county local
depository for survey records N/A
city, town N/A state N/A

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 William J. Fowler Mill and House are located in rural Monroe County, Tennessee, approximately six miles south of Loudon and ten miles north of Madisonville on the Sweetwater/Fowler's Mill Road. The buildings are situated on opposite banks of Fork Creek in the gently rolling hills of central East Tennessee. Constructed around 1875, the one-story mill consists basically of two sections, a clapboard grist mill and an open, heavy-timber-frame saw mill. The house was built about the same time as the mill and is an example of post-Civil War rural vernacular architecture in East Tennessee. The one-and-a-half-story, clapboard building is T-shaped in plan with a gable roof, three interior chimneys, and simple front and side porches. The nominated property also includes the 1940's concrete mill dam which replaced an earlier wooden one. The buildings and site retain an outstanding degree of their historical and architectural integrity.

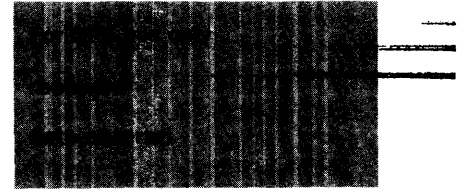
The property is situated in a rural area of Monroe County, Tennessee, which still possesses its nineteenth-century historical context of open fields, farms, and woods. Between the mill and the house is a dam and Fork Creek which empties into the Little Tennessee River approximately four miles away. The banks of the creek are wooded and somewhat steep. In the late 1940's the current concrete dam replaced an earlier wooden one which had been washed away.

The grist section of the mill building is a long, one-story clapboard structure with the main gable-end facing east on the Sweetwater/Fowler's Mill Road. The land under the building slopes off to the south to the edge of Fork Creek, requiring wooden pilings on stone bases. The east façade has an off-center pair of batten doors and a doorway at the southeast corner leading into a shed addition running the full length of the south elevation. The north elevation has two entrances between one-over-one windows, one being a pair of batten doors and the other a single, paneled door. Attached at the northwest corner of the west elevation is a shed addition containing a nineteenth-century buhrstone mill run by water power from a tub turbine located under the saw mill. The interior of the main section of the grist mill consists basically of one large space with exposed ceiling joists and rafters. The machinery in this section includes three large seed-cleaning machines operated by electricity and a small roller mill run by water power.

Attached to the southwest corner of the grist mill is the saw mill. Resting on tall, ashlar piers, the building is of open heavy-timber-frame construction. The mortise-and-tenon, hand-hewn timbers support a tin, gable roof. The saw mill has a wooden floor with a railing around the periphery. The concrete headrace from the dam passes under the saw mill to the tub turbine. No equipment from the early saw mill operation remains. There is a small paved parking area immediately to the north of the mill.

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Like the mill, the house was constructed soon after a flood in 1875. The one-and-a-half-story, clapboard building is T-shaped in plan with a gable roof, three interior chimneys, and simple front and side porches. The two sections of the house are connected by a covered breezeway. On the north elevation of the section which forms the stem of the T-plan, there is a porch with square posts separated by elliptical arches and a simple balustrade. On the south elevation there is a shed addition. The fenestration consists of six-over-six windows on all elevations and small, three-pane windows under the eaves. The interior contains the kitchen and a large adjoining room, which originally was probably the dining room. The interior walls are covered in narrow, vertical boards, and there is a simple mantle in the room adjacent to the kitchen.

The other major section of the house, which faces west, has a simple porch with chamfered posts. The tin covered gable roof has two interior chimneys of glazed brick with corbeled caps. There is a central hall flanked by four rooms on the first floor, each of which has a fireplace and simple, original mantles. The hall contains an unadorned quarter-turn stairs which leads to an upstairs central hall with two flanking rooms. There is a low door in the east wall of the hall which opens into the bare attic space of the other section of the house. The upstairs and downstairs walls are covered in narrow, vertical boards, which are now painted but which were possibly papered at an earlier time.

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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates ca. 1875

Builder/Architect William J. Fowler

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The William J. Fowler Mill and House are nominated under National Register criteria A, B, and C. The property is significant in the industrial and architectural development of East Tennessee as a noteworthy example of a once common sight during the nineteenth century of a mill, dam, and miller's house along the region's major creeks. Individually the mill and house are valuable as excellent post-Civil War examples of a typical grist and saw mill and a vernacular residence of a rural middle-class family. The nominated buildings and site are also important for their association with the notable nineteenth-century Kelso milling family and with William Jasper Fowler (1838-1916), locally prominent politician, farmer, and miller.

Born in Cocke County, Tennessee in 1838, William J. Fowler served in the Tennessee House of Representatives from 1875-77 representing Monroe and Loudon counties and from 1887-89 representing Monroe County. In addition to being a large land owner, farmer, and stock raiser, Fowler was important to the area as a skilled miller. He operated the mill at Eve Mills with the help of his family for almost forty years from the 1870's until his death in 1916.

The grandfather of Fowler's wife was a Revolutionary War soldier named Hugh Kelso who moved to Blount County in East Tennessee between 1793 and 1801 and built a grist and saw mill on Baker's Creek in Morganton, so beginning a locally important line of millers. Hugh Kelso and his son, Charles, later moved to Eve Mills in Monroe County and constructed a mill on Fork Creek sometime before the senior Kelso's death in 1817. Charles Kelso and other family members operated the mill until the property came into the possession of William Jasper Fowler after his marriage in 1861 to a daughter of Charles Kelso, Mary Josephine. Descendants of the Kelso family say that there were three early mills at Eve Mills prior to the current one, which was built by Fowler after a severe flood in 1875 destroyed the last Kelso mill. The descendants of Mary Josephine Kelso and William J. Fowler continued in the trade of millers and operated the nominated mill until 1937 when it was sold to Samuel E. Ghormley, the father of the current owner, Rhea Ghormley Alexander. Since that time the mill has been in operation on a part-time basis and is now being completely restored by millwrights who have worked extensively with historic buildings.

The Fowler Mill is the only active mill in Monroe County and one of the county's four known surviving mills. Many of the mills in East Tennessee during the nineteenth century were approximately the same size as the nominated mill, were either of timber-frame or log construction, and often had both grist and saw mill capabilities. These

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property approx. 2 acres

Quadrangle name Loudon, Tennessee

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	6	7	4	3	4	0	0	3	9	4	7	4	8	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

Zone		Easting				Northing							

C

Zone		Easting				Northing							

D

Zone		Easting				Northing							

E

Zone		Easting				Northing							

F

Zone		Easting				Northing							

G

Zone		Easting				Northing							

H

Zone		Easting				Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification

See Continuation Sheet

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state	N/A	code	N/A	county	N/A	code	N/A
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state	N/A	code	N/A	county	N/A	code	N/A
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11. Form Prepared By

name/title	Lloyd Ostby Rhea Ghormley Alexander		
organization	Tennessee Historical Commission	date	October 1982
street & number	701 Broadway Fowler's Mill Road, Route 4	telephone	615/742-6723 615/458-2282
city or town	Nashville Loudon	state	Tennessee 37203 Tennessee 37774

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

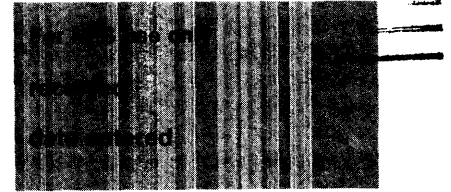
As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the Heritage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

Deputy
State Historic Preservation Officer signature *Herbert L. Hoyer*
title Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission date 12/14/82

For HCERS use only	
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register	Entered in the National Register
<i>Melous Byrum</i> Keeper of the National Register	date 1/27/83
Attest:	date
Chief of Registration	

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 Mill and House

utilitarian structures have not received the attention given to the more picturesque, multiple-story mills with water wheels, and consequently the small, more typical mills of the nineteenth century have become rare and not sufficiently protected and preserved.

The house which William J. Fowler built for himself and his family across Fork Creek from his mill is representative of middle-class vernacular residences in East Tennessee from the second-half of the nineteenth century. Although once widespread, these houses are quickly disappearing from the region, and it is very unusual to find a building of the architectural quality of the Fowler House in such sound and unaltered condition. The building illustrates the aesthetic value of vernacular structures in their simple proportions and clear expression of materials and function. The house is an excellent document of the daily life of a middle-class family of the time.

The house is now rented, and there are plans for its use by the person who will be operating the mill.

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Alexander, Rhea Ghormley. "Additional Information Submitted for National Register of Historic Places for the Mill at Eve Mills in Monroe County." Files. Tennessee Historical Commission, Nashville.

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Burns, Inez. History of Blount County. Nashville: Benson Printing Co., 1957.

Chambers, Henry A. Diary, 25 February 1875. Special Collections, Graduate Library. University of Tennessee, Knoxville.

Goodspeed, Weston Arthur. History of East Tennessee. Nashville: Goodspeed Publishing Co., 1887.

McBride, Robert M. and Dan M. Robinson. Biographical Directory of the Tennessee General Assembly. Vol. II, 1861-1901. Nashville: Tennessee State Library and Archives, and Tennessee Historical Commission, 1979.

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For NPS use only

received

date entered

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property is bounded on the north and east by Sweetwater Road and its right-of-way, on the south by a wire fence, and on the west by a line running across the top of the dam and roughly parallel to Sweetwater Road. The nominated property is roughly rectangular in shape, measuring approximately 520' x 160'. The site includes approximately two acres of the 156 acre farm owned by Rhea Ghormley Alexander. Included is the minimal property needed to convey the historical setting of the mill and house.

William J. Fowler Mill and House
Eve Mills, Monroe County, Tennessee
Tax Map
Scale 1" = 400'

