

## NEW SMYRNA SUGAR MILL RUINS

## U.S. 1, Fla. 90, New Smyrna Beach Volusia County

Arched doors and window openings in thick coquina walls are all that remain of a sugar mill that represents the expansion of the plantation economy in Florida before the Seminole Wars.

The plantations in the area of New Smyrna were destroyed in late 1835, or during January of 1836, in the Indian hostilities, and it is probable that the sugar mill suffered the same fate.

The ruins and general layout are similar to those at the Bulow Plantation Ruins, and the mill is known to have been under construction at the time of a visit of John James Audubon in 1831. The small building which houses the steam machinery for sugar production was not in use before 1800.

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Prese

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The terrain surrounding the New Smyrna Sugar Mill Ruins is flat and covered by a pine and live oak hammock. The ruins which remain are cut coquina block, a rock-like substance composed of tiny shells and sand which was quarryed in the area. The layout of the mill and the adjacent engine room can be determined by standing walls, arched doorways and windows, or in their absence, the footing foundations of missing sections. The wells used to supply the steam boiler may be seen as well as the base of the tall chimney of the engine house. The ruins are open to the public year round and walkways and interpretive signs guide visitors.

An attached drawing, researched by Cash H. Coe, depicts the layout of the sugar mill at the time of its destruction in December of 1835.



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PERIOD (Check One or More as	Appropriate)		
Pre-Columbian	16th Century	18th Century	20th Century
15th Century	17th Century	X 19th Century	
SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applical	ble and Known) 1835		
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In December of 1835, the outbreak of the Second Seminole War brought the full wrath of a determined and resourceful foe down on the plantations lying along the St. Johns and Halifax Rivers. In a matter of days a young and flourishing sugar economy was dealt a blow from which it was never to recover.

The New Smyrna Sugar Mill Ruins are historically significant because the events which took place there and the resulting occurrence are typical of the whole region. Prior to the Territorial Period, in both Spanish Periods and the British tenure, grants had been relatively numerous in the coastal area between St. Augustine and New Smyrna due to the rich swamps and hammock lands and the availability of waterborne transportation. Boyd states that, "by the early thirties substantial steam-powered sugar mills, many housed in stout stone buildings, had been erected on several of the estates, so that the economic development of this short stretch of the upper east coast exceeded that of any other part of the territory, not excepting Middle Florida."

In 1830 William Kemble contracted to build a steam sugar and sawmill for William DePerster and Eliza and Henry Cruger of New York. This mill, now known as the New Smyrna Sugar Mill Ruins, was constructed on land which Cruger had purchased from Ambrose Hull. Originally the land was granted to Hull during the Second Spanish Period and subsequently confirmed under territorial administration.

In 1835, A black servant of Mrs. Jane Sheldon, wife of the overseer of the Cruger and DePeyster property, attended a Christmas Eve dance on an adjacent plantation and saw Indians lurking about. These Seminoles (approximately 80 to 140 in strength belonging to Philip's band)wrecked havoc not only to the Mosquito Inlet area, but up and down the entire east coast. On Christmas day, they plundered the Cruger and DePeyster Plantation, among others, forcing the Sheldon's to

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New Smyrna Sugar Mill Ruins - Significance - page 2

flee across the Halifax River to safety. The following night, the sugar mill and other buildings in the area were put to the torch. Sixty of the DePeyster Blacks were led away by the Seminoles.

That winter, a similar series of events took place on numerous other plantations. Subsequent occupation of ruins by troops in the course of the war resulted in their alteration for defensive reasons. This, in addition to vandalism, undoubtably caused as extensive damage as originally caused by the Seminoles.

In the 20th Century, legends were to grow in the area around New Smyrna that the ruins were an old Spanish Mission, built in the 17th Century; research (documentative and architectural) disproved these rather romantic claims.

These ruins attest to an agricultural economy vigorous enough to warrant a significant architectural undertaking on a remote territorial frontier. Their continued preservation offers the public a visual link with the past, contributing to a fuller understanding of the Territorial Period of Florida history.



Form 10-300a (July 1969)	UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE	STATE
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ENCIN SUGAR MEW BET HOUSE POOM HE 344 BY CAPE, CH SUGAR CHIMNEY 38.0-1 V SHYRNA DRYING 8 ROOM A 14 Martin Disting 31-91 ASUK DOM 0.0 COOLING SHED ġ, MILL FLORIDA 50-0 \* π 7 .... × 5E OE 5'E 23-02 LIVING ROOM Ì PAW .: Probable Arched Windows. K: Kettles, called "Coolers." Both walls and foundations missing: Blank lines. Foundations present but walls missing: Single mesh AD.: Arched Doors. AW.: Arched Windows. Joists in Sugar Drying Room: Low walls for floor PDA.: Probable Doors, Arched. Foundations and walls present: Double-mesh lines. **Explanation of Drawing:** . Ņ línes.

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	<sup>7</sup> Form 10-301 (July 1969)	UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF TH NATIONAL PARK SERVICE	E INTERI	DR	STATE Florida	
	▶ 1	NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTO	RIC PL.	ACES	COUNTY Volusia	
		PROPERTY MAP FORM	A		FOR NPS USE ON	LY
S		(Type all entries - attach to or enclo	ose with	map)	ENTRY NUMBER 70.8.09.0000	PATE 81/2/71
Z	T. NAME					
ο	COMMON:	New Smyrna Sugar Mill				
	AND/OR HIS	TORIC: Cruger and DePeyst	er Su	gar Mil	1	
F	2. LOCATION					
U	STREET AN					
		ile west of New Smyrna	off S	tate Ro	ad 44	
	CITY OR TO					
8		myrna		1		
H	STATE:	-	CODE	COUNTY:		CODE
S	Flori		12	Volu	isia	127
z	3. MAP REFER				0 - 1 1 <b>(</b> <del>12</del> )-	
-		U.S.C.&G. Survey, New S			Quadrangre	tiba
	SCALE: 1:	Volusia County (7.5 min	ute s	eries)	DEDENIE	1 - 1
ш	DATE: 19		·····		A RELEIVE	
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S		UDED ON ALL MAPS				IAL ET
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		tude and longitude reference.		,	61 181	THY

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