

HISTORIC RESOURCES OF HARTWELL, HART COUNTY, GEORGIA

INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY #27

I. IDENTIFICATION

HISTORIC NAME: Franklin Light and Power Company Steam Generating Station
 CURRENT NAME: Georgia Power Company structure
 STREET ADDRESS: Leard Street at railroad track (no street number)
 CITY: Hartwell
 PRESENT OWNER: Georgia Power Company
 MAILING ADDRESS: P. O. Box 670
 CITY: Hartwell
 STATE: Georgia
 ZIP CODE: 30643
 CURRENT USE: storage
 ACREAGE: less than one acre
 U.S.G.S. QUADRANGLE: Hartwell, Georgia
 U.T.M. REFERENCE: Z17 E321025 N3803090
 V.B.D. OR TAX MAP NUMBER: H-13-1-8.1

II. DESCRIPTION

ARCHITECTURAL DESCRIPTION AND PRESENT CONDITION:

This building is a utilitarian, one-story, brick structure. It is rectangular in plan and contains a flat roof. The minimal adornment stems from its original industrial use as a steam generating plant. The open interior includes a pit in the center of the cement floor which originally housed the generator. The building contains segmentally arched window openings with radiating voissiors of brick. The windows are now boarded over. The principal facade is divided into three bays by simple engaged brick pilasters. A corbeled brick cornice decorates the structure. The original central entrance has been modified through the infill of concrete block; a modern, standard-sized doorway provides access to the interior. The interior consists of a single major open space. No original electrical generating equipment remains in the structure.

PHOTOGRAPH NUMBER: 89

III. HISTORY

ORIGINAL OWNER: J. B. McCrary Company
 ORIGINAL USE: steam generating station
 ARCHITECT/BUILDER: Franklin Light and Power Company
 HISTORIC ACREAGE: not known
 DATE OF CONSTRUCTION: early 1900s
 DATE(S) OF ALTERATIONS: post-World War II

HISTORICAL NARRATIVE (FROM ORIGINS TO PRESENT):

This structure was built in the early 1900s by J. B. McCrary as the steam generating plant for the Franklin Light and Power Company. The plant supplied electrical power through a distribution system to Hartwell and the surrounding communities of Canon, Lavonia, Bowersville, and Royston. According to The History of the Georgia Power Company, "J. B. McCrary Company and the Franklin Light and Power Company sold this system to the Georgia Power Company in September, 1916." The sale "included the steam generating station on the outskirts of Hartwell from which municipalities were served."

The steam plant is situated in the area of the original waterworks for the town. The present regional manager for the Georgia Power Company in Hartwell has noted that water from Scott's Pond was pumped into a reservoir located beside the steam plant. This system is no longer in operation. The site of the reservoir is located on an adjacent tract and is no longer visible. The original generator has been removed from the steam plant. The building is now used for storage of outdated equipment.

IV. SIGNIFICANCE

NATIONAL REGISTER CRITERIA: A, C
 AREA(S) OF SIGNIFICANCE: Architecture and Engineering
 LEVEL OF SIGNIFICANCE: Local

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL):

This property is significant in terms of architecture and engineering as the sole surviving structure associated with the introduction of electrical power to Hartwell in the early 20th century. The structure once housed the generator which provided electric power to Hartwell and, as well, to the surrounding municipalities of Canon, Lavonia, Royston, and Bowersville. From this building came the electricity which made possible electric lights, appliances, industrial electric power, and electric street lights in Hartwell. Many Georgia communities had similar electrical power systems in the early 20th century, but few generating plants survive. The Hartwell plant is a good representative example of the relatively small size and utilitarian design character of these functional buildings.

CONTRIBUTING/NON-CONTRIBUTING RESOURCES:

Contributing structure(s): 1

V. SOURCES

REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS: Historic Structures Field Survey: Hart County, Georgia

SOURCES OF INFORMATION: Interview with Harold Gresham, Regional Manager, Georgia Power Company, Hartwell; Wright, Wade H., History of the Georgia Power Company, Atlanta: Georgia Power Company, 1957.

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VI. SITE PLAN/SKETCH MAP/FLOOR PLAN

Attached sketches are intended only to help illustrate the nominated property. No scale is provided or implied, unless otherwise noted. Boundary markings are simply general indications of the extent of the nominated property; the actual boundary description, unless otherwise noted, is the current legal description of the property which coincides with the current tax map number cited in Section I of this form. Also, note that the orientation of the various sketches differs from sketch to sketch; each is provided with a north arrow for clarity.

