

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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RECEIVED

MAR 16 1982

DATE ENTERED

APR 15 1982

**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 Elliottville Lower Mill

AND/OR COMMON

Peep Toad Mill

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Peep Toad Road^{Rd.}

N/A NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

East Killingly vic, N/A VICINITY OF

2nd -

STATE

CODE

COUNTY

CODE

Connecticut

09

Windham

015

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

DISTRICT
 BUILDING(S)
 STRUCTURE
 SITE
 OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

PUBLIC
 PRIVATE

 BOTH

PUBLIC ACQUISITION

IN PROCESS
 BEING CONSIDERED
N/A

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

Richard & Sandra Farrell

STREET & NUMBER

Peep Toad Road

CITY, TOWN

Killingly

N/A VICINITY OF

STATE

CT

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Killingly Town Clerk

STREET & NUMBER

P.O. Box 707 127 Main Street

CITY, TOWN

Danielson

STATE

CT

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

State Register of Historic Places

DATE

1981

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Connecticut Historical Commission

CITY, TOWN

Hartford

STATE

CT

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

Elliottville Lower Mill, known for at least 78 years as Peep Toad Mill, is a small stone and frame building probably built about 1850 as a cotton mill. In the 19th century, it was part of the complex owned by the Elliottville Manufacturing Company, whose main mill was about 1/8 mile upstream on Whetstone Brook. The Lower Mill is situated in a wooded setting on a back road. The mill pond is across the road and is retained by a cut stone dam. The road across the brook is carried on two rubble stone arches, and similar stone work forms the headrace just north of the brook's channel. The dam, race, bridge and mill are all included.

The mill is 40 x 75' in plan and is 2½ stories high, with its gable end facing east toward the road. The lower story is a rubble of flat stones with a stuccoed finish, and the upper story and attic are of frame construction. To the rear is a two-story addition built about 1940, a replacement for an earlier wing. The attic story is lighted by a trap-door monitor about halfway down the slope of the asphalt-shingled roof. The upper exterior is covered with clapboards, which stop against panelled pilasters at the corners. There is a partial return of the very simple cornice. The facade has panelled double loading doors at all three levels, flanked on each side by a pair of windows on the first two stories and a single opening at the attic level. The side elevations are eight bays long. Windows on the first story have been replaced by a single pane of glass, but the others are fitted with six-over-six sash. There are two chimneys in the mill and one in the wing, of which only the small brick stack at the rear of the main building is old.

The mill is presently used as a residence, studio, and craft exhibition space, but other than the replaced windows and a skylight added to the rear of the south slope of the roof, the change in use has little affected the exterior. Power is being generated by a small turbine located at the point where the headrace meets the mill. Although not an old installation, this follows the practice of the earlier turbine which was substituted for wheels located in the pit beneath the building. Because the pit was filled in with concrete when a tannery occupied the mill, nothing can be seen of the original waterpower except for the outline of two tailrace arches on the south wall. Another loss was the removal of a small square cupola with pilastered corners, visible in early 20th-century photos. However, in general the effect of 20th-century alterations has been to remove accretions which obscured the historic appearance of the mill. For example, a small shed-roofed shelter for the turbine and belting appended to the east wall has disappeared, as has the external tower added some time after an insurance survey found the internal stairs a hazard in 1885.

The interior of the first floor has been fitted up as a gallery. The second floor is partly finished as a residence and partly unfinished and open, with small chamfered wood columns supporting the floor above. However, these columns are not the original system: this floor was entirely free of supports, the crossbeams above being carried by iron tie-rods from the roof trusses. The tie-rods extending down from the ridge are now cut off (though some have been restored) but the diagonal rods running from the rafters to a point a third of the way in from the ends of the crossbeams are still in place, as are the wooden trusses bracing the rafters at this point. Some of the timbers forming the frame of this post-and-beam building are hewn and others are sawn out. Floors consist of two layers of planking, the upper one laid diagonally. The stairs are at the east end, next to a series of trap doors which lie just within the loading doors. The interior is finished very plainly, with evidence of plaster walls visible. On the second floor is a simple dado of horizontal beaded boards.

FHR-8-300A
(11/78)

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HERITAGE CONSERVATION AND RECREATION SERVICE

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Killingly, CT

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Owners (continued):

The roadway and two-span bridge are owned by the Town of Killingly
P.O. Box 707
127 Main Street
Danielson, CT

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/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 c. 1850 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Elliottville Lower Mill, also known locally as Peep Toad Mill, is important as an example of an early textile mill. Typical of the small mills built in the 1830s, 40s and 50s, the building is an increasingly rare survivor of a distinct architectural form (Criterion C). The mill is also important for local history, as it is one of the last of many mills which drew their power from Whetstone Brook, a fast running stream with 200' of fall in just one mile. (Criterion A).

Most of Connecticut's textile mills built before the Civil War, and even many thereafter, were not the huge buildings surrounded by acres of tenement housing which have come to characterize the region. Rather, they were small mills built by modest, often local, entrepreneurs, with only a few units of workers' houses. Most of these mills have disappeared: many were of frame construction and were more susceptible to fire than the larger stone and brick mills. Others were replaced by larger mills on the same site. Peep Toad Mill, however, has survived in a relatively unaltered state. Among the features which make it typical of antebellum mills are the Greek Revival detailing; the trap-door monitor, made obsolete by the mansard or shallow-pitched roofs popular later on; the interior stairs and elevator and the insubstantial flooring, a contrast to the stair towers and slow-burning construction which insurance companies persuaded later mill owners to adopt; and the relatively small proportions. One feature which was continued throughout the 19th century and which is of great architectural interest is the suspension of one floor from the roof trusses, thereby creating a clear space the whole width of the building. Although superseded by the addition of posts, the original truss system is easy to see and has been restored in part of the mill.

The mill is typical of early textile development in Connecticut, historically as well as architecturally. The first or upper Elliottville mill was built in the 1830s by Killingly residents Thomas Pray and Henry Westcott and was constructed of stone, about the same width and length of the lower mill but four stories high. In 1844 they sold the property to Albert Elliott of Providence and Nelson Eddy, a manufacturer who came from Chepchet, Rhode Island. Later, the Elliottville Manufacturing Company was formed, including as a partner Welcome Bartlett, a local man who had moved from Woonsocket. The exact date of the construction of the lower mill is not known.¹ The lower mill was used for spinning and preparing the warp for the upper mill's looms. The Elliottville Company ran through the 1880s and produced cotton print cloth. Women and children made up nearly two-thirds of the work force. Today, only the lower mill and one or two houses once owned by the company are still standing, though the dam and other stonework can be seen at the site of the upper mill.

In the 1830s, the town of Killingly had more cotton mills than any other town in the state. The largest mills became the basis for textile mill villages at Danielson, Ballouville, and Dayville, but many mills of a smaller size were located along Whetstone Brook. Stone and frame construction were used about equally. For the most part, these small Killingly mills, like mills in many other parts of

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

- Arnold, H.V. Memories of Westfield, Danielson, Conn., Including a Historical Sketch of the Town of Killingly. Larimore, N.D.: Priv. Pr., 1908.
- Bayles, Richard M. History of Windham County, Connecticut. New York: W.W. Preston & Co., 1889,
- A.T. Elliott & Co. Elliottville Manufacturing Company. New York: Barlow's Insurance Survey, 1877; supps. 1882, 1885.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 2.8

QUADRANGLE NAME East Killingly QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24 000

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>1,9</u>	<u>2,6,3,9,9,0</u>	<u>4,6,3,5,6,2,0</u>	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			
E				F			
G				H			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated property includes Lot 2, Block 371, as shown on Killingly Assessor's Map 6073 and Lot 6, Block 342 on that map (dam and mill, respectively.) It also includes the road and bridges in between.

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Bruce Clouette, Consultant

ORGANIZATION Connecticut Historical Commission DATE December 15, 1979

STREET & NUMBER 59 South Prospect Street TELEPHONE (203) 566-3005

CITY OR TOWN Hartford STATE CT

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 

TITLE Director, Connecticut Historical Commission DATE February 23, 1982

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Delores Byers Entered in the National Register DATE 4/15/82

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST: _____ DATE _____

CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

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Significance (Continued):

eastern Connecticut, were built and operated by local men or men from neighboring towns, but there also was substantial investment from outside manufacturers who formed companies with the local entrepreneurs. Elliottville Lower Mill was built by just such a partnership. As a counterpoint to the large mills in nearby Danielson, it is a fit representative of the town's and region's small-scale industrialization.

¹The traditional origin of the lower mill as given by Tucker and subsequently repeated is that the building was Thomas Durfee's ax shop and, after then being used as a saw and grist mill and machine shop, was fitted up with textile machines by Eddy and Elliott. Arnold gives the date of 1846 to their use of the building but is unclear whether the mill was a conversion or a new building on the site of Durfee's shop. Part of the problem is that Durfee himself was an entrepreneur with an interest in several water privileges.

I believe the mill was built new by the Elliottville company. The stonework of the dam and bridge resemble that of the upper mill, and the plain pilasters match those on one of the company's houses. The form of the building is uniform and substantial, unlike any saw and grist mill known to the author. Documentary evidence suggests the second mill was built or occupied between 1850 and 1860: in that decade, the number of employees went from 32 to 54, capitalization doubled from \$25 000 to \$50 000, and production increased from 323 000 to 830 000 yards of cloth. The figures for 1870 were little changed. However, the Durfee saw, grist, shingle mill and machine shop complex was not bought by the company until 1862. (Vol. 42, p. 266, Killingly Land Records). The boundaries of the several privileges cannot be determined precisely, but one reconstruction is that the lower mill and pond were constructed on the 30 acres owned by the company west of their upper mill (Vol. 39, p. 279) and that the Durfee property was just north, later acquired to control water entering the pond.

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Bibliography (continued):

Tucker, James N. "The Mills of Chestnut Hill," in Allen B. Lincoln (ed.), A Modern History of Windham County, Connecticut. Chicago: 2 vols., S.J. Clarke, 1920, 208ff.

Weaver, Margaret et al. Miles of Millstreams. Killingly: American Revolution Bicentennial Commission of Killingly, 1976.

U.S. Census Office. Census of Industry, MS Schedules, State Library, 1850-1870.