

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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DATE ENTERED SEP 13 1976

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

Newsom's Mill

AND/OR COMMON

LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

Big Harpeth River, near Newsom Station Road

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Nashville

VICINITY OF Newsom's Station community / Fifth

STATE

CODE
047

COUNTY

Davidson

CODE
037

Tennessee

CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" 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: Vacant; see No. 8

OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

State of Tennessee (Department of Conservation)

STREET & NUMBER

2611 West End Avenue

CITY, TOWN

Nashville

VICINITY OF

STATE

TN

LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE.

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Registry of Deeds

STREET & NUMBER

Metro Nashville Courthouse

CITY, TOWN

Nashville

STATE

TN

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

HARPETH STATE SCENIC RIVER MASTER PLAN

DATE

May 1, 1974

FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR

SURVEY RECORDS Dept. of Conservation, Division of Planning & Development

CITY, TOWN

Nashville

STATE

TN

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input checked="" 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

Newsom's Mill was constructed in 1862 of hand-dressed limestone blocks which were cut from the Newsom Quarry only a short distance away. The mill house, located on the banks of Big Harpeth River, measures 37.9 feet by 46.4 feet and is approximately 40 feet tall. The walls are approximately 32 inches thick and the stone blocks were laid without the use of mortar. The remnants of the mill dam, originally of logs and replaced in 1907 with concrete, still span the river (north to south); the center portion of the dam has broken away and the river flows freely through the gap.

The wooden roof and flooring of the three-story mill burned about 1960. The iron shaft and wheel of the turbine-powered mechanism are still extant in the gutted interior.

The mill remains as an excellent example of the stone mason's craft and the exterior walls are in good condition.

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 checked="" 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 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 1862

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Joseph Morton Newsom

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Newsom's Mill is the only existing mill in the Big Harpeth area of Davidson County, and is an excellent example of the stonecutter's art of the mid-nineteenth century. The mill has served as a major rail stop (Newsom's Station) and for almost a century was the center of the small community around it. The vast importance of grist- and sawmills to early settlers usually insured settlement of the area surrounding them. As early as 1800-1808, two wooden mills (Demoss's Mill, a few miles upstream from Newsom's Station; the first Newsom Mill, believed to have built by William Bryant Newsom, was located near the site of the present stone structure) served the community but a flood in 1808 "removed the mill-house of Mr. Newsome." William B. Newsom was the father of Joseph M. Newsom, who constructed the hand-dressed limestone millhouse in 1862. The Newsom family settled on Big Harpeth River around 1800, coming to Tennessee from Virginia where the Newsoms had also been known as millers, millwrights, and farmers. The stone mill on Harpeth River was a turbine-powered gristmill, and a distillery was located downriver--just east of the mill (the concrete foundation still remains).

Stone for the mill (and for the magnificent stone mansion, "Harpeth Heights," home of Joseph M. Newsom; the home was of such sturdy construction that, when Interstate Highway 40-W was constructed across the site, it required the use of a wrecking ball and large quantities of dynamite to destroy the place) was cut from Newsom's Quarry. It was located upstream--about one-fourth mile--from the mill. Newsom stone is found in many important buildings still standing in the city of Nashville.

James Ezzell, father of the immediate past owner of the mill, bought the mill and 600 acres of land at auction in 1905. He continued operation of the gristmill to serve the community, and power from the mill was used to operate the Ezzell Mill and Stone Company from c.1912 to 1930. The stone-crushing business was operated near the quarry; the concrete structure which housed the steam-powered stone crusher still stands on the south side of the railroad tracks and Interstate Highway 40-W.

James Ezzell deeded the mill and a little over 5 acres of surrounding land to his son, John M. Ezzell, around 1930. Newsom's Mill and 5.65 acres around it were purchased from Ezzell in 1974 by the State of Tennessee as part of the development plan for the state Scenic Rivers Act. The Department of Conservation has prepared a master plan for the site which calls for the renovation of the millhouse to be used for administrative headquarters, visitor information, displays and exhibits, etc. There is also planned a parking area for 30 cars, as well as 15 sites for picnic tables and launching sites for canoes and other small boats.

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

"Newsom's Station," by Eilene M. Plummer, Suburban News Progress Edition, Feb. 24, 1972.

1974 Master Plan, Harpeth River State Scenic River, Tennessee Department of Conservation, May, 1974.

Interview with John M. Ezzell (former owner), April 29, 1975.

History of Davidson County, Tennessee, by W. W. Clayton, 1880.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 5.65

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>16</u>	<u>500-320</u>	<u>3992-640</u>
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C			

B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

Ilene J. Cornwell, public services

ORGANIZATION

Tennessee Historical Commission

DATE

January 22, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

170 Second Avenue, North

TELEPHONE

(615) 741-2371

CITY OR TOWN

Nashville

STATE

TN

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL X

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

Herbert L. Jorgensen

TITLE

Executive Director, Tennessee Historical Commission

DATE

1/26/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Active

Tom Hentrich

DATE

9/13/76

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

Charles A. ...

DATE

7/15/76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER