February 15, 1995

Seven Mills Survey
Historical Contexts

Subjects of the historical contexts are:

- Period of construction
- Grist mill economy in transition
- Grist mill technology in transition
- Architecture
- Mill hamlets

Period of Construction

The seven mills were all constructed within a brief period of years, from the late 1882 to 1905. This apparent coincidence of time is significant. Other known mills in the Missouri Ozarks with analogous characteristics were built in the same period.

The following are relevant to the period of construction:

1. The survey water mills were not the first mills at their sites. Predecessor mills at those water power sites were constructed at a variety of times.

2. The survey water mills differed from their predecessors in that they utilized the expensive new tub-turbine drive technology and steel roller flouring machinery (Zanoni excepted), indicating the desire of their owners to greatly increase the scale of *flour* production for markets outside their locales. The steam-powered mills located in the towns of Licking and Summersville exemplified the same trend.

3. The late nineteenth century was a time of general prosperity in rural and small town America. In the Ozarks, population was growing, and industrial lumbering, mining,

and railroad construction abetted an unprecedented flow of money as well as the availability of credit. This historical epoch may be termed "the New South Ozarks."

In the New South Ozarks, new mill entrepreneurs, whether outside newcomers or scions of old families, were willing and able to undertake greater financial obligation in hopes of greater return. For example, the brothers James and George Washington McCaskill respectively built the Summersville and Alley mills, in the same year, 1894. The McCaskills were from an old Tennessee family who had farmed at the forks of Pike and Little Pike Creeks in southern Shannon County. In the 1880's the Ozark Land and Lumber Company bought their farm and sited the great Fishertown mill upon it. The McCaskills took the money and opened general stores, first across the creek in Winona, then in Eminence, twelve miles north. From the proceeds, coupled with credit developed through the stores' businesses, they were able to finance the two expensive mills.

4. In summary: Factors in the society and economy of the United States and of the Ozarks coalesced at the end of the nineteenth century to prompt the construction of new water and steam mills in the Ozarks, many of them high-tech, capital intensive facilities that looked beyond the traditional local markets of custom milling to the larger markets of region and nation—to "market milling." Six of the seven survey mills exemplify this change. Zanoni, by exception, illustrates a continuation of the essentially local custom milling tradition.

The Grist Mill Economy in Transition

The economy as well as the technology of grist mills remained traditional until the

mid-nineteenth century. Transport of grain and meal, relatively heavy products, was brought *to* the mill by the grower, and taken *from* the mill by the consumer—usually the same person or family. The miller milled the grain and took a fraction, or "toll," in payment. The profit in grain was a trade item for the miller, to be exchanged either for cash or for other goods—millers in the Ozarks were often storekeepers too. This economy of grinding a producer's grain for his own consumption was "milling to the custom," or "custom milling," i.e. milling upon demand.

A series of interlocking events in the late nineteenth century, alluded to above, prompted many millers to enlarge their scale of operations. The coming of railroads to their vicinity offered transport to outside markets. The new tub turbine water drives could use an available head of water more efficiently, greatly increasing available power. Steam engines allowed mills to be located at the most economically advantageous locations, usually in towns. The marketing of steel roller milling machinery and complex sifters to previously isolated millers meant they could now produce white flour in quantity. Easier and more abundant credit meant that more expensive machinery could be purchased. And, sine quo non, the lure of mass markets, especially new urban markets far beyond the locale of the mill, beckoned. The promises of more power, increased production, efficiencies of scale, and third-party railroad transport enticed not only millers themselves, but outside entrepreneur-capitalists who wanted to invest in mills.

However, heavy new demands fell upon such "market millers" that were little known to small custom millers. First, the new machinery was expensive, typically requiring financing at substantial rates of interest. Second, the machinery was relatively complex,

demanding mechanical expertise. Third, a variety of business skills was required, in addition to knowledge of the miller's craft. Finally, and perhaps most critical, the high output merchant mills had to have a consistent and abundant supply of grain from growers, who might or might not share the miller's interest in money making.

The seven mills of this survey can be placed along a continuum between simple custom milling and large scale market milling. Zanoni represents the essentially custom mill; Licking and Summersville, both steam-powered town mills, represent for this group the most advanced concept of the small market mill.

Grist Mill Technology in Transition

Technology and economy were intimately connected. The traditional low-tech mill was a low-cost mill. "Corn cracker" mills, with one set of buhr stones set to grind corn for meal, required only the purchase of the stones. Buhr stones were typically imported from the Pyrenees of France. Virtually everything else—wheel, shafts, belts, even gears—could be produced locally. The water power was considered to be "free." (Harnessing water power often proved more expensive, and more problematic, than anticipated.) If one were to mill flour, a second set of stones, or resetting the cornmeal stone, was necessary. The output of such mills was small, but the cost was low. Zanoni illustrates this type of mill.

The new high-tech mill was a high-cost mill. All of its essentials had to be purchased from outside sources. Experts had to come from the manufacturers to install the machinery and instruct the miller in its use. Though efficiencies of scale could be achieved, resulting in low *unit* cost of production, very many units had to be sold to amortize the high original

cost. All the survey mills save Zanoni illustrate this principle to some degree.

Architecture

Timber Frame Design. The six flouring mills in the survey are remarkably alike in their architecture, despite differences in detail (Zanoni is an exception discussed below). They are composed of strong, heavy post-and-beam timber frames stiffened by at least three floors. They were built to carry the weight and withstand the vibrations of steel roller mills and their associated sifters, cleaners, and elevators. The frames stand alone, without the support of masonry walls. (Indeed, a part of the "mill aesthetic" derives from their curtain walls of lap siding, common to all of them, which, with their relatively small windows, provide a characteristic tall, bulky barn-like look.)

The architectural distinction possessed by these mills results in part from the size of their timbers and the elegance of their joinery. They are all pegged, with little if any metal strapping, rodding, or bolting (nails were employed, especially in joists and flooring). The mill structures represent a kind of final phase of an ancient timber frame building tradition which used wood cut in the locale and formed on site by master builders.

Subtypes of mill design. The seven mills exemplify three different subtypes of mill buildings. Licking and Summersville, the town steam mills which are also the largest mills in the group, represent in prototype the size and rationalization of the big urban industrial mills which within a generation would make Ozarks village mills economically obsolete. At the opposite extreme is Zanoni Mill, the smallest of the group and the only one not a flouring mill. It is a small building of only two stories, light balloon frame construction, and

relatively primitive workmanship. With its overshot wood and iron waterwheel, it is the type of traditional small "corncracker" custom mills. Despite being of the old style, it was the last built of the seven mills—1905. The other four mills of the survey—Dawt, Rockbridge, Topaz, and Hodgson—are between these poles, though all four are closer in size and construction to Licking and Summersville than to Zanoni.

Distinctive siting. The attraction of rural water mills for innumerable mill lovers probably results in part from their bucolic settings near running water. Their waterside settings are noteworthy from a design standpoint as well. Siting and founding are ingenious, sometimes even breathtaking. Siting was determined by the locus of the flow of water to drive the turbines. Because water flow has an inexorable character which can be manipulated only in certain ways, the mills had to be taken to the water as much as the water to the mills.

Rockbridge, Topaz, and Dawt mills share site characteristics. Each is perched on a high stream bank. But each is necessarily extended *outward*, beyond the bank. The ideal for power efficiency was to receive the turbines' vertical drive shaft directly onto the milling floor. So the mill had to be *above* the turbine, which was located near the base of the stream bank. When viewed from the stream side, these mills look like castles suspended in the air. Actually Dawt and Topaz rest on high wall-like foundations, while Rockbridge sits upon massive piers.

The most ingenious in its siting and founding is Hodgson. At the site, a spring issued from near the base of a steep bluff, originally emptied onto the ground, and flowed a hundred yards or so into Bryant Creek where average surface level is some ten to fifteen feet lower than the spring orifice. The power harnessing solution was to sink a turbine well near

the spring into the limestone substrate, to a depth above average high water level of Bryant Creek. A tunnel shaft was driven from the bottom of the well toward the creek, to a location where the ground falls away to the level of the tunnel, thus accommodating the tail race. Both the spring orifice and the tail race shaft orifice were then stabilized with limestone barrel vaults. A tub turbine was placed in the well, (eventually two tub turbines), with the drive shaft extending vertically onto the mill floor above. The mill rests upon a narrow shelf of rock at the rear with tall posts at the front. The main block of the mill rises a total of three and a half stories, making the entire ensemble quite tall.

Footprint area in square feet of each mill*:

1. Summersville - 3,726**
2. Licking - 2,089
3. Dawt - 1,609 (original mill)
4. Hodgson - 1,493
5. Rockbridge - 1,440 (mill proper)
6. Topaz - 1,139
7. Zanoni - 857

Architectural Summary. Though differing in details, the six flouring mills share basic similarities of materials, design, and construction. All are traditional pegged timber frames exhibiting great strength and a high quality of workmanship. The tub turbine mills evidence daring site and foundation characteristics. The one exception, Zanoni, exemplifies the tradition of the small, light, often crude, corn grinding custom mills designed to carry a large water wheel—in this case an overshot wheel. Such mills were far more prevalent in the Ozarks than the larger, later, and much more expensive tub turbine or steam mills.

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* Data derived from SCOCOG sketch plans.

** Includes some non-mill areas.

Hamlets

Hamlets developed at the sites of the five surveyed water mills. (The two steam mills were built in existing towns.) Indeed, already established custom clienteles in the hamlets, previously developed around earlier mills, may have encouraged owners to embark on the expensive expansion projects of their new turbine drive mills. Grist mills were stimuli for the development of rural hamlets—one of their significant socio-economic functions.

"Hamlet" is a word which literally means "small village." Mill hamlets in the Ozarks, however, seem to have had some characteristics that differed from typical villages, even smaller ones. They had no grid of streets, no plat, no lots, none of the "layout" typical of American villages. Indeed, their landscapes, and some of their socio-economic character, were kin to European peasant villages and to the ménage of feudal manors. Certainly they are reminiscent of the service centers of commercial ante bellum southern plantations and their post-bellum crossroads store descendants.

Ozarks mill hamlets were typically proprietorships, in which all the land and its various enterprises were owned by a single person or family. The proprietor might himself be the miller. But more often than not a miller seems to have been hired by the proprietor, who might be occupied with a variety of other occupations, including farming. The proprietor was a businessman and the hamlet was his business (perhaps among others). Certainly the proprietor was a capitalist, whose expensive mill marked him usually as the wealthiest Ozarks ruralist (at least the one likely to have the largest debts).

Lacking business records, we can only surmise the profit-and-loss figures for the mills, especially such a flood-plagued mill as Hodgson. All water mills were beset with

problems related to their troublesome "free" water power. Water too high, or too low, curtailed or prevented operations. Flood damage to dams and raceways was common. Market prices fell as well as rose. Competition from larger steam mills directly served by railroads increased apace, especially after World War I. Nearby wheat growers might provide insufficient grain to utilize the mills' potential capacity. All lacked grain storage facilities, making off-season market milling impracticable. Regardless of such problems, debt payments on the roller mills, turbines, and other purchased equipment must be paid regularly. How then, could the mills pay their way? The answer may have been, *they brought much trade to their hamlets*.

If mills did not make money for their owners, the stores operated next to them certainly did. So did other service enterprises that clustered around mills—cotton gins; post offices; smithies; livery stables; perhaps a saw mill using the grist mill's power source; and lodging places. In fact, the hamlet proprietor was a versatile trader as well as a service provider. The store not only *sold* necessities—groceries, hardware, and dry goods—it also *bought* every valuable commodity produced in the area. These included timber products such as railroad ties and stave bolts; cream and eggs; skins and hides; ginseng and golden seal; cattle and poultry; cider and vinegar; molasses, honey and maple sugar; wild game; and even fruits, vegetables, and berries. Mill hamlets exported more than flour and meal. When industrial mining, lumbering, or other wage-paying enterprises operated nearby, a market existed among the workers for all manner of goods and food stuffs, including, of course, grist from the mill. Storekeepers also traded goods for work such as draying, woodcutting, and the common labor necessary to such busy places.

Mill hamlet stores usually housed a post office. The postmaster might be the storekeeper's wife or some other family member. Neighborhood customers not only came to mill; they would combine trips to the post office, store, and other service sites, making such trips on a regular basis, weekly or bi-weekly depending on distance and other factors.

After World I, the merchant milling prospects for the rural water flouring mills diminished, and they seem to have slowly reverted to custom milling for a local clientele. In those years, a new enterprise was added to three of the hamlets—overall making. Electric sewing machines, powered off small direct drive dynamos in the mills, were set in the store at Hodgson, in the mill building at Zanoni, and also in the mill (presumably) at Dawt.

The mill hamlet was the primary service center for the rural Ozarks before improved roads and automobiles. After their advent, the shift to towns as the primary trade and service center accelerated. While not all hamlets had mills, few mills, in all probability, were without a hamlet setting. All the five survey water mills were the centers of hamlets.

Seven Mills Survey
Location, Description, Integrity, History

Dawt Mill

Location: The mill is located on the east bank of North Fork River (historically the Great North Fork of White) in southeastern Ozark County. By auto, it is reached as follows: east of Gainesville on US 160 to CR PP, north a mile, then west a mile to Dawt at the river.

Description: Dawt Mill sits high on the river bank, above twin tub turbines which provided its power through dual shafts. It rests on imposingly high foundation walls of poured concrete and stone-in-concrete. A long stone masonry race carries water from the river above the dam to the turbine wells. A 425′ dam spans the width of the river (the impoundment of Norfork Lake reaches to within a mile of the mill). The mill is sided with lapped siding, as is every mill in the survey.

The riverbank north of the mill has been terraced into three levels, the lowest of which carries the flume of the race. The terraces are retained by walls of heavy coursed limestone, the originals of which are unmortared. Recent repairs are stone-in-mortar, similar to the south mill foundation, doubtless also a recent replacement of the deteriorated original.

Dawt Mill and its "cousin" Hodgson Mill—both built by Alva Hodgson—are very barn-like in appearance. Dawt, apparently never painted, has a particularly countrified appearance. The overall appearance is effected by various site modifications intended to please tourists, but which are somewhat at odds with the ambience of the original working mill. Principal case in point: a "cosmetic" non-functioning water wheel attached to the north end of the kitchen addition.

The mill retains much of its original machinery (see interior sketch plans).

Integrity: The mill retains high integrity, save for a large kitchen addition on the north side, and some changes in the porching. Dam and race remain little changed. The turbines are still in place, and are apparently functional.

History: Dawt Mill was built ca. 1900 by Alva Hodgson, a millwright who also built the Hodgson Mill. An earlier mill stood on the Dawt site, built perhaps in 1866. It was torched at the instigation of an upstream competitor, after which Hodgson acquired the site and built the present mill. It provided custom milling service, but also attempted merchant mill operations.

The Dawt hamlet had a general merchandise store (a post office was opened at the store in 1907), a blacksmithy, cotton gin, sawmill, and a "family home," built in 1905.

Licking Mill

Location: The mill is located about a block north of the town center in Licking, Texas County. The town is sited on the Licking Prairie, a site that is quite flat for the Ozarks. The mill is situated near a small shallow stream near the center of town. This stream fed a pond east of the mill which supplied the steam engine's boiler.

Description: Licking Mill presents the most distinctive appearance of the survey mills. This results from its design as an *industrial building* rather than as a species of oversized barn. Its sash opening windows are large, capped with modestly decorative lintels, and are arranged on all four sides in regular rows of three for each of the three floors (the first floor level, east side, is obscured by the engine house).

The mill is a tall, rectangular box, its lap siding painted white. A distinctive feature

of the mill's appearance is the very shallow gabled roof. The purpose of this feature was to provide a third floor with nearly as much height at the outside walls, floor to ceiling, as in the center. The mill does not have a porch, though the height of the doors suggests that porches may once have been present. A large forecourt at the south side of the building provided space for wagons. The mill retains most if not all of its machinery (see interior sketch plans). The engine room was a separate structure attached to the east end of the mill.

Integrity: Licking Mill is pristine. Its machinery is in place and seemingly intact. The Licking Community Betterment Association has purchased the mill and invested considerable money in research and restoration activities.

History: The Licking Mill was constructed in 1882, the first at its site. It probably represents the earliest Ozarks phase of the movement of mills from country to town—though Licking did not have (and never has had) a railroad. It was, however, on a principal north-south wagon road which culminated at the Rolla railhead to the north.

The Licking Milling Company was organized in 1882 by three men, J.L. Campbell, J.A. Craven, and B.F. Craven. In 1886 W.A. Freeman bought out the Cravens, and William Ray bought half ownership. The following year, 1887, the mill's three buhr stones (capacity 40 barrels of flour per day) were augmented with steel roller mills with a capacity of 60 barrels. In 1920 new machinery replaced all the original machinery. The mill was clearly intended to operate as a merchant mill; but it always did custom milling. Records of the 1930's indicate a good deal of milling for families, a practice probably continued as long as it operated.

Hodgson Mill

Location: Hodgson Mill is located in northeast Ozark County where MO 181 crosses Bryant Creek, between Dora and Sycamore. The highway passes just in front of the mill.

Description: "Picturesque" is the way many observers would describe Hodgson Mill. It and Alley Mill in Shannon County are arguably the most photographed of Ozarks mills, and deservedly so. Sited on a narrow shelf of rock, perched on tall posts among which the spring water gushes, with water bubbling into the overflow pond in front and rushing from the tail race tunnel at the side, bowered by ancient sycamores, it glows in its coat of subdued red paint (now well faded).

An old photograph of Hodgson (no date) portrays a very different impression, one of Ozarks rural scruffiness. It is a portrait probably typical of the mill in the heyday of its operation. The old photo does show clearly the inconvenience of the mill's elevated situation. Wagons had to drive up an incline to a point not at the mill but at the end of a rickety platform leading to the mill, perhaps twenty five feet distant. The weigh scale is on the opposite side of the drive ramp, away from the platform. Was weighing accomplished by driving one wheel of a wagon onto the scale platform?

The mill was powered by two tub turbines, one driving a small dynamo. The dynamo, its fuse box, and some of the wiring remain in a separate room, an addition at the southwest corner of the original mill block directly above the second turbine well. The dynamo provided light for the mill and store, and ran electrical sewing machines making "Big Smith" overalls above the store. In addition to the dynamo, a scourer alone remains of the first floor machinery. An important furnishing however is the miller's share bin, on the north wall, an

indication of the custom milling aspect of the business.

Integrity: The level of integrity of the structure is high, though a generation of neglect shows in faded paint and some wood deterioration. Especially worrisome is the decay of some support timbers under the mill. The turbines have been pulled. Milling machinery is gone. A fake water wheel is under the mill, fashioned from an electric cable storage reel. The mill has been changed over time by additions, which in most cases qualify as historic additions.

History: A mill was built at the site soon after the Civil War (one local tradition believes the earlier mill may have been elsewhere on Bryant Creek). The present mill was built in 1897 by Alva Hodgson, who had bought the preexisting mill in 1884. The first turbine turned French buhr stones with a thirty barrel per day capacity. The second turbine and the dynamo were added between 1910 and 1921. The mill operated primarily as a custom mill until the 1950's. Then the milling and marketing in area supermarkets of whole wheat flour under the label "Hodgson Mill—Stone Ground Flour" was begun. In 1975 milling operations ceased, and the milling of Hodgson Mill-labeled products moved to a modern high-tech mill near Gainesville. In the late 1980's a private not-for-profit corporation, The Living History Foundation of Ozark County, was given an option to purchase the mill by the owners, heirs of the Hodgson and Aid families (*not* the owners of the Hodgson Mill-label flours).

Rockbridge Mill

Location: Rockbridge Mill is located in the Rockbridge hamlet, now the Rockbridge

Trout Ranch resort, on Ozark CR "N," three miles north of MO 95 in extreme north central Ozark County.

Description: The mill sits on the north bank of Spring Creek. A large portion of the bank has been removed or washed out, the mill building being founded on massive masonry piers footed on bedrock in a basement-like understory. The turbine well was once situated at the southwest corner of this understory. The well and turbine are now both gone. The race, or canal, which served the turbine is likewise gone, now filled in. But its course can be discerned, upstream near the bank for at least an eighth of a mile.

A dam some twelve feet high impounds the creek at the mill. No spillway exists, and the water cascades over the dam in a picturesque fall. The trout operation has a hatchery, producing millions of fry annually. When big enough, these are released just below the dam, to serve fisherman guests.

The main mill structure is in two blocks, a three story mill proper on the west, and an attached single story, shed-roofed former cotton gin building on the east. The gin area has been floored in concrete and opened on two sides as a kind of porch for guests. The mill is not open to the public, but retains most, if not all, its original machinery.

Integrity: The gin room is redone, save for the roof, the northeast outside wall, and the wall joining it to the mill. The mill remains intact save for replacement of some foundation piers, concrete stabilization of its west foundation wall, and—most important—a covering of recent metal siding, painted red. A small portion of the west wall above the base plate remains uncovered, revealing the original tongue-and-groove pine siding.

History: Rockbridge hamlet was long the seat of the original Ozark County, which

embraced present Douglas County, western Howell County, and eastern Taney County. Rockbridge was approximately the center of that original county. (The first Rockbridge hamlet, founded 1841, was downstream some miles in present Douglas County, at the confluence of Spring and Bryant Creeks. It was torched during the Civil War.) In 1868 a log dam and mill were built at the present site. In 1886, B.V. Morris bought the property and enlarged the mill. In 1895 the present mill was built and a limestone dam replaced the old log dam. A sawmill, planing mill, and gin were presumably run off the grist mill turbine.

Milling operations ceased in 1948. In 1954 Lile and Edith Amyx bought the property, repaired, painted, and modernized the old hamlet, and added the hatchery and guest housing.

Summersville Mill

Location: Summersville Mill is located at the east edge of the village of Summersville in Texas County, only a few yards from the Shannon County line. MO 106 passes close to the mill.

Description: The mill is on gently sloping ground, with the front door and loading dock at the high (east) side. The back of the mill slopes down to near the edge of a mill pond, which supplied water for the steam boiler in the basement (west end of the mill). Built about a decade after the Licking Mill, the original Summersville mill was in plan somewhat like it, though narrower and a bit shorter. The distinctive shallow pitched roof is common to both, however. Unlike Licking, many additions have been made at Summersville, making it by far the most complex of the survey mills (see plans). Summersville Mill is unpainted, and may never have been painted. The machinery, including the steam engine, remains.

Integrity: The mill seems little changed, though its building history has been dynamic, as is illustrated by its many additions. These doubtless occurred during the years of its milling operations—though a large corrugated iron shed, to operate as an auto garage, was under construction against the south wall of the mill in the spring of 1995. The siding and foundation show some deterioration.

History: Though the construction date of the present mill is difficult to ascertain exactly, certain facts are known. In 1886 James McCaskill bought the mill then existing at the site. In 1894 he mortgaged a portion of his land there to the Richmond City (Indiana) Mill Works, doubtless to pay for new steel roller mills for Summersville. Amount of the debt: $2,250. The old machinery (probably buhr stones) was moved to the new Alley Mill of his brother George Washington McCaskill. (Local history has the machinery sold to Horace Greeley. Was he G.W. McCaskill's millwright? His miller?) Alley had steel roller mills too, also purchased from the Richmond City company. Whatever the details, one may surmise that the construction of the Alley mill and the modernizing of the Summersville mill in the same year by two entrepreneurial brothers was more than coincidental.

Topaz Mill

Location: Topaz is located on the east bank of the upper North Fork River (Great North Fork of White River), in extreme east central Douglas County. By auto it is reached as follows: from MO 76 south on Douglas CR EE to end of pavement, thence west and north on graded road a mile to the river.

Description: Topaz Mill, like Dawt, sits upon the east bank of the North Fork River.

However, Dawt is far downstream where the river is wide and the bank high. At Topaz, far upstream, the river is smaller and the bank lower. Topaz Mill is smaller too, being the smallest of the three story mills. The configuration of the mill is simple, with a nearly square main block of 2½ stories, a 20' x 20' el off the southeast corner (barbershop and storage shed), and a small gear house pavilion cantilevered beyond the back wall. It extends out over the turbine and receives the drive shaft. Topaz, perhaps more than any of the other mills, looks like a tall barn. Originally painted white, the current owner repainted the mill red in the early 1960s.

Inside this relatively small building is a full flouring mill, with three steel roller stands and the sifters to make white flour. A buhr mill for corn grinding is also present, typical of the other flouring mills.

The turbine is served by a race along the bank, supplied in turn by a spring-fed mill pond impounded behind a large, low, arcing earthen dam. This mill pond is unique among the survey mills, and doubtless served well to maintain a constant water supply in times of low water flow, as well as to protect the works during flood conditions.

Integrity: Topaz Mill is pristine. It retains all its machinery; and is probably not beyond restoration to working order. The turbine functions perfectly, the gears are greased, and the buhr stone, at least, turns. The barber chair is still in place in the tiny barber alcove; the prices of haircut and shave are still chalked on the wall. Topaz Mill may well be the least changed, best preserved water mill in the Ozarks.

History: The present mill was built in 1895, and like most of the survey mills, is on or near the site of an earlier mill in a preexisting hamlet. As early as 1840 a Choctaw Indian

woman named Alabeth Freeman received a patent of land here, perhaps a grant in consequence of her Indian status. She and husband Aaron built the first mill. So by 1895 Topaz had been a functioning hamlet for over half a century. As with other hamlets, however, the end of the nineteenth century was a time of great development and expansion, beginning with the new roller mill. In turn were built the store (1913), barbershop, post office, blacksmithy, and large barn (1919). The owner-proprietor was one Robartus "Bart" Hutcheson. After his death, his widow built the dwelling across the road from the mill (site of an earlier store). In the 1930's a cannery was added—probably the final building in the old Topaz hamlet.

Zanoni Mill

Location: Zanoni Mill is located at the west edge of Pine Creek valley, a hundred yards or so above the MO 181 crossing of the creek. The locale is in northeast Ozark County. (Zanoni Post office, long located in the store next to the mill, has been moved to a service station a few miles down MO 181 toward Gainesville.)

Description: Zanoni is unique among the survey mills in several ways. It is the smallest, is the only wheel-driven mill, is the only one of two stories, is of balloon frame construction, and possesses a recessed portico corner entrance. In recent years it has been treated to a coat of white paint with dark green trim, matching the paint scheme of the store and old house, the other surviving hamlet structures. The mill is very clean, and is open to the public. Zanoni Mill, store, and dwelling are unique in their setting as well: they sit next to a large new house. In front of this ensemble is a landscaped lake of some two acres. The

big house is the Zanoni Mill Inn, bed and breakfast, and the residence of the owners, David and Mary Morrison. Mr. Morrison also runs a large brood sow operation and cattle herd on his land.

The most prominent feature of the mill, of course, is its operational overshot water wheel. A 1940's reconstruction, it drives nothing today.

Integrity: The building is well preserved, with few apparent changes. The oaken flume carrying water to the wheel is recent, as is the cement-plastered tail race carrying runoff water into the lake. One corn cracker buhr stone mill stand remains on the premises.

History: The water power source is a spring located in the hill slope above the valley floor. Such an elevated water source, with its naturally occurring head, was attractive to millers. As early as the Civil War a log-built mill was there. In 1900 John Cody and George Shoemaker built another mill, which burned in 1904. A.P. Morrison, grandfather of the present owner, bought the property and built the present mill with 18" French buhr stones capable of grinding 20 bushels of corn per day. In addition to the mill and store, a blacksmithy and cotton gin were operated at Zanoni hamlet. In the 1920's a dynamo was added, producing power for ten industrial sewing machines upstairs. "Blue Jay" overalls were sewn there.

The mill ceased operations in 1951.

Summary of Identification and Evaluation Methods

Survey Method Techniques were 1) visual field examination and study of properties; 2) examination of documentary photographs; 3) oral interviews with informants; and 4) documentary research. Documentary evidence is sparse, there being no business records yet found for the mills (Licking alone excepted) or related rural hamlet enterprises. Indeed, few property-specific documents have been found.

Historic Context Determination The obvious context is rural and small town grist mills within three adjacent counties of the south central Missouri Ozarks, built within 23 years of each other. All of the water mills are located on or in the immediate watershed of one river—the North Fork of White. Another important context is that all the five rural mills were the centers of rural hamlets, whose historic importance is thus explored. The larger and more general context is the socio-economic history of the Ozarks region in the late nineteenth century. The history of a related mill—Alley in Shannon County—provides context as well.

Property Types All properties are mills, structures related to mills, and properties present in the historic mill hamlets surveyed.

Integrity criteria Integrity is defined as approximation of original appearance and fabric. Integrity includes issues of persistence, continuity, and change. Integrity of all extant properties surveyed is high.

(Examples of answers to the inquiry about identification and evaluation are provided in the Statement of Historical Contexts, the central historical element of the Seven Mills Survey.)

Bibliography

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Informants

Ed Owens (Hodgson Mill)
Joe O'Neal (Topaz Mill)
Ron Reeves (Summersville Mill)
Carol Bucher (Dawt Mill)
David Morrison (Zanoni Mill)
Myrna VanDeusen (Licking Mill)
Members of Amyx family (Rockbridge Mill)
Ruby Robins (Ozark County Mills)