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Gray's Mill: National Register Application Form Section 7, Draft

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United States Department of the Interior
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Gray's Grist Mill
Bristol County MA

The eleven acre west boundary of Gray's Grist mill includes the millpond, a forest and spillway. One quarter of this acreage is in Massachusetts . The remaining three quarters is in Rhode Island. The east boundary of the eleven acres are intersected by Adamsville Road, a Massachusetts State Road build on top of the mill pond dam on the pond's east side—a cultural boundary separating the mill pond from the mill. A wooden spillway and fish ladder are located on the north east Massachusetts side of the pond, about two hundred feet north of the mill. **See Map.1.** A stone lined sluiceway that feeds the mill's penstock is located under the Adamsvile Road directly opposite the mill. **See map.**

Gray's Grist Mill is located on 1 and 1/2 acres, bringing the total acreage owned by Gray's mill to 12 and 1/2 acres. Gray's Grist Mill is a one story shed type building with a gable roof. The foundation is dressed granite. The walls and roof are finished with cedar wood shingles.

The west side or front of the mill building sits at ground level with Adamsville Road and is set back thirty feet from the east edge of the road and sixty feet from the east edge of the millpond. The main entrance door, a sliding board and batten door, is on the west side and is located directly behind the cut granite stone-lined penstock (or water storage tank) that stores the water to run the mill. The front of the mill's granite foundation is flush with the top of the ground then the terrine slops five feet eastward to the back of the mill.

Attached to the north gable end of the mill complex is the remains of the granite foundation for a 19th century sawmill that shared the turbine used for milling. Because the terrine drops five feet from the west front of the mill to the east back the exposed area of the east granite foundation is five feet high with a small opening for attaching a belt from the interior machinery's belt pulley for powering the mill through the foundation opening to a belt pulley on an exterior auxiliary engine. This five foot high east foundation wall stops 10 feet 5 inches from the buildings north foundation to create a nine foot high and a nine foot deep opening over the wheel pit. The north end of this opening is supported by the north foundation wall. The first floor at the back of the opening is supported by the east wall of the granite penstock.

There is a single six light casement window in the center of the mill's east wall with a six over six double hung window on either side.

The east back of the mill meets a flat field bounded on two sides by stonewalls. Intersecting the field is a stream for draining water that seeps underground from the millpond. On the north side of the field is the stone lined tailrace boarded on its north side by a steep bank. The tailrace begins at the northeast end of the mill building and flows east ward about 300 feet to meet the head waters of the West Branch of the Westport River.

By 1854 a carriage makers shop or wheelwrights shop (here on referred to as a carriage makers shop) had been attached at right angles to the south gable end of the mill. The walls and roof are finished with cedar shingles.

The carriage makers shop is a one and one half story shed type structure. The foundation is dressed granite with two feet six inches (2'-6") exposed on the west gable end. The south granite foundation sits on the same sloping plain as the mill.

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The cellar is entered on the south side through a 5 foot (5') tall door followed by a step-down of ten feet (10'). The side entrance into the wheelwrights shop and grist mill is located five feet (5'-0") east of the cellar door. Originally the east gable end of the carriage makers shop ended nine feet five inches (9'-5") short of the mills east wall. In 1999 a two story addition was built off the east gable end. The addition extends eastward to line up with the back wall of the mill. Built five feet (5') above grade it is supported by three granite stone piers. The roof and walls are finished with cedar wood shingles. The north wall has two, six over six, double hung windows. The west gable end has double doors with a loft door above and a double hung window on either side. The south wall has two six over six double hung windows on the first floor and one in the 1999 addition. The new east wall addition off the carriage makers shop has two six over six double hung window on the first floor and one six over six double hung window on the second floor. Fifteen feet from the west end of the carriage makers shop is a small 20th century storage shed 8' x 6'. The foundation is pored cement. The walls are vertical painted boards and the roof is shingled.

An access driveway, approximately thirty five feet wide, separates the south side of the carriage makers shop from a circa 1890 building, know as the bakery The bakery sits on the same five foot slop as the mill and carriage shed. Bounded on its west front by a stonewall the gable end of this one story bakery sits seven feet six inches from the east edge of Adamsville Road. The foundation is dressed granite. The walls and roof are finished with cedar shingles. The remains of the bake ovens are in the north east corner of the cellar. At the turn of the 20th century the bakery closed down and the building became Sanford's Meat Market. By 19__ the building was empty and remain so until 1980 when Ralph Guild bought the Gray's Mill property. In 1985 Guild renovation the interior of the building for use as income producing space.

Gray's Grist Mill interior.

The interior space is open from floor to ceiling. In general the mill is constructed of what appears to be odd bits an pieces of reused lumber. The roof ties are hewn with no saw marks. The remaining timbers have cut vertical or circular saw marks. The walls are studded with board wainscoting on the east and south wall with plaster above. The entire wall at the north end of the room is covered with random spaced horizontal boards. The original door that led from the grist mill into the saw mill is located at the north west corner of the gable end. .The miller's platform, the area over the gear's husk frame and turbine, includes three quarters of the first floor area. Located on the miller's platform are two mill stones, a granite stone for grinding johnnycake meal and a French burr stone for grinding other meals. The fifteen inch thick stones weigh 1 and 1/2 tons. Directly behind the mill stones is the wooden crane used for lifting the upper mill stones for sharpening. In the north west corner of the millers platform is a large wooden wheel or sluice gate wheel used to open the iron gate in the penstock for providing water to the turbine In the north east comer is a trap door for access to the turbine's shaft. On the west side of the platform is a pit—seven foot six inch by fifteen foot six inches. The floor of the pit is three feet five inches below the miller's platform. This area is used to funnel the ground meal into a sifter divides the shaft for, bla, bla bla.* In the same area are the clutches and levers used to raise, lower or disengage the mill stones Next to the clutches is a small door for access to the gears below the miller's platform. A south doorway leads from this area to a room where the meal is hand bagged and readied for sale.

* Needs more words.

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Carriage maker's shop. Interior

Originally an open space with studded walls and a board ceiling for storage above.

In 1982 the carriage makers shop was renovated. The studded walls were covered by wide board wainscoting with plaster above, and is presently used as a store for mill related items.

The carriage makers shop still has singles on the north wall of the now interior section suggesting that the building was moved and attached to the south end of the mill.

The fact that When the mill property was sold to John Church in 1854 the deed refers to a sawmill, grist mill, and wheelwright shop. In the previous 1846 deed, the carriage makers shop was not mentioned.