

Cheshire No. 1 Mill  
Southeast corner Main and  
Grove Streets  
Harrisville  
Cheshire County  
New Hampshire

HABS No. NH-173

HABS  
N.H.  
3-HAR  
3-

PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

## CHESHIRE NO. 1 MILL

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- Location: Southeast corner, Main and Grove Streets, Harrisville, Cheshire County, New Hampshire.  
Geographic Location Code: 28 - 0213 - 005  
Latitude: 42° 56' 45" N Longitude: 72° 05' 40" W  
(Approx. center, intersection of Main and Grove Streets.)
- Present Owner: Cheshire Mills Co., Main Street, Harrisville, New Hampshire.
- Present Occupant: Cheshire Mills Co.
- Present Use: The mill is not in use (the firm has been in receivership since first half of 1971).
- Statement of Significance: The mill was built in 1847 and was operated continuously as a woolen textile mill from 1850 to 1971. It is the only granite building in the village. It is typical of the stone mills that were common in southeast Massachusetts and Rhode Island at the time of its construction.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

## A. Physical History:

1. Original and subsequent owners: Harris Mill Co.; 1847-1850. Cheshire Mill Co.; 1850-present (firm in receivership as of first half of 1971).
2. Date of erection: 1847.
3. Architect: Cyrus Harris, Superintendent.
4. Builder or contractor: Asa Greenwood.
5. Original plan and construction: Two stories plus basement and attic, granite, slow-burning mill construction; 111'-6" long, 44'-2- $\frac{1}{2}$ " wide. The mill was patterned after the southern New England or "English" precedent with continuous clerestory windows and an entrance bell and stair tower.
6. Alterations and additions: The No. 1 Mill has been added to extensively on the north, east and south sides (Nos. 6, 5, 4, 3 and 2 Mills and Store House). A separate

Store House (c. 1860) stands to the northwest of No. 1 Mill.

B. Sources of Information:

1. Primary and unpublished sources:

Armstrong, John Borden. "Harrisville: A New Hampshire Mill Town in the 19th Century." Ph.D. Dissertation, Boston University. (Microfilm copy on file at National Museum of History and Technology, Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.) See bibliography for complete list of unpublished sources.

2. Secondary and published sources:

Armstrong, John Borden. Factory Under the Elms. Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Boston: 1969. This is the first book to be published on Harrisville. It is based on the Ph.D. Dissertation cited above.

Hellman, Peter. "A 'Williamsburg' That's Really Lived In," New York Times (Sunday, March 28, 1971), Section XX, pp. 7, 35.

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The only granite building in Harrisville, built in 1847, patterned on southern New England precedent.
2. Condition of fabric: Fair.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Over-all dimensions: 111'-6" x 44'-2- $\frac{1}{2}$ "; thirteen (13) bays; two (2) stories plus basement and attic; rectangular in shape.
2. Foundations: Granite.
3. Wall construction, finish and color: Load-bearing granite, grey, ashlar (coarse finish).
4. Structural system, framing: Load-bearing granite walls. Slow-burning timber plank, beams and columns (one center row of columns, basement and first floors). Second floor has a clear span due to the fact that the attic is

supported by 7/8"  $\phi$  steel rods hung from the wood roof trusses.

5. Porches, stoops, bulkheads: Main entrance porch in stair tower.
6. Chimneys: None.
7. Openings:
  - a. Doorways and doors: Wood frames in masonry openings, wood panelled doors.
  - b. Windows and shutters: Wood frames and sash (double-hung, 15/15).
8. Roof:
  - a. Shape, covering: Gable, with continuous clerestory; slate shingles.
  - b. Cornice, eaves: Wood.
  - c. Dormers, cupolas, towers: Bell tower cupola over main entrance. Cupola roof is sheathed in sheet-metal.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans: All floors are rectangular. The basement and first floor have a center row of columns dividing the length into two equal segments. The second floor has a clear span and the attic has a center row of steel rods supporting it.
2. Stairways: One wood stairway constructed of winders, main entrance stair tower, southwest elevation.
3. Flooring: Slow-burning wood plank.
4. Wall and ceiling finish: Walls: basement and attic levels are exposed stone. First and second floors are plaster. Ceilings: exposed slow-burning construction.
5. Doorways and doors: Wood frames in masonry openings, wood panelled doors.
6. Special decorative features: None.
7. Notable hardware: None.
8. Mechanical equipment: None.

D. Site and Surroundings:

1. General setting and orientation: The No. 1 Mill spans the Nubanusit River. It is approximately in the center of the several larger brick additions that have been built from the 1860's to comparatively recent times (1946).
2. Outbuildings: Store House, northwest of No. 1 Mill.

Prepared by Robert M. Vogel and  
Ted Sande  
National Park Service  
August 12-14, 1968;  
July 1971

PART III. PROJECT INFORMATION

This building was recorded as part of the New England Textile Mill Survey II; which was sponsored by the Historic American Buildings Survey of the Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation of the National Park Service, and the Smithsonian Institution. The project was assisted by the Merrimack Valley Textile Museum, North Andover, Mass.; the Fall River Historical Society; and the Bristol Community College, Fall River, Mass. It was the second of two summer surveys whose purpose was to record representative examples of the buildings of the New England textile industry.

The field work, historical research and record drawings were done in the summer of 1968 under the direction of Robert M. Vogel (Curator of Mechanical and Civil Engineering, Museum of History and Technology, Smithsonian Institution), Project Director; Professor Melvin M. Rotsch (Architect, Texas A & M University), Project Supervisor; and David L. Bouse (University of Nebraska), Peter S. Conrad (Yale University), Eric N. DeLony (Ohio State University), and Dennis W. Jacobs (University of Kansas), Student Assistant Architects.

Historic documentation and editing of the project data were done in the summer of 1971 by Ted Sande (Architect, University of Pennsylvania), under the auspices of the Historic American Engineering Record of the Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation of the National Park Service.