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**Document Title: Newsom Station / Newsom Mill, Williamson County, Tennessee, 2000**

Source: *West Nashville: Its People and Environs* by Sarah Foster Kelley, pp. 158-9, n. d.; and "Newsom's Mill . . . A Silent Memorial," Hugh Walker, *The Tennessean*, 13 May 1976. Photos courtesy of Rudy Northdurft in 2000.

**Newsom's Mill** is on the **National Register of Historic Places**; in 1974, the State of Tennessee purchased the mill site which is to be restored. The roof of Newsom's Mill was destroyed by a tornado some time ago. The mill, the Harpeth River, and a railroad came together at Newsom's Station.

Newsom's Mill and Newsom's Station were founded by **descendants of William Newsom, who came to Surry Co., Virginia, about 1630**. This branch of his descendants had moved from Surry Co., Va. to Southampton Co., Va. and then on to middle Tennessee in the late 1700s. They settled in the southwest corner of Davidson County, now Williamson County, Tennessee.



Sign marking Newsom's Mill



Inside the mill, showing grist mill equipment



View of the old mill dam on the Harpeth River



Old mill, showing tornado damage



The original Newsom's Mill was located upstream & was destroyed by a flood in 1808. Joseph M. Newsom constructed this turbine-powered gristmill in 1862 of hand-dressed limestone cut from Newsom's quarry, a mile south. Newsom's stone is found in many important buildings in the city of Nashville.



Old Mill, sans roof (tornado damage)



The Harpeth Rives flows along the side of the mill.

**Newsom's Mill, distillery and station,** were developed by the family of William Bryant Newsom (b 1776), son of William Newsom (b ca 1730) and son of Sampson Newsom, (b 1710-15). William B. Newsom married Lucinda Morton and they built their home near Harpeth River and the present Newsom's Mill.

The original Newsom's Mill was destroyed by a flood in 1806. The existing Newsom's Mill was built of hand-dressed limestone blocks in 1862, close to a railroad station (Newsom's Station) by their son, Joseph Morton Newsom, Sr. (d 1864). Joseph's well-known brother-in-law, Samuel W. Adkisson, probably engineered the construction of the mill, distillery and Joseph's stone house. The stones in the Mill walls are massive--some are five feet long. A post office and store were soon built near the mill. Newsom's Mill was a turbine-powered gristmill. (Joseph's grandfather, William Newsom, also operated a mill in Southampton Co., Virginia.) Newsom's Station was well located--at a spot where a road, the railroad, and the Harpeth River came together.

Joseph's nearby **plantation home**, built between 1840 and 1850, was a three-story, squared stone dwelling located on a knoll west of the Harpeth River. The home was late Georgian in style and was covered with gray stucco. Sadly, the home and its outbuildings were demolished when I-40 was built, although you can see huge slabs of stone from the highway.

The **limestone blocks** came from a quarry about one mile south of the Mill and located behind the old Joseph Newsom home. Many important Nashville buildings are built from stone from the Newsom quarry. Numerous slaves worked milling, farming, quarrying and logging on Joseph Newsom's 1780 acre plantation. After his death, a large portion of his estate, including the mill was mortgaged by his widow and sons to Samuel W. Adkisson, Joseph's brother-in-law. The Adkissons appear to have been the principal millers at Newsom's Mill from 1864 to 1905 when James Ezell purchased the Joseph Newsom property.

It is not an easy place to find, unless you have directions. If you ask around Nashville, or call the library, no one can help you. It isn't on tourist maps. So, save these directions:

**Directions:** From Nashville going West on I-40, exit at #196 or Highway 70S; right on Highway 70S to Highway 70N (3-4 miles); left or west on Highway 70 for a couple of blocks; left on Newsom Station Road. At this point there is a large subdivision sign that says "Newsom Station, est. 1790." About a mile or just after you cross Harpeth River you can see the ruins of the mill on the left side. Continue straight ahead -- not under the railroad tracks -- to the parking lot of the Newsom Park.