

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

For NPS use only
received
date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number all

Page 14

Site No. 9

Photo No. 9

✓ Name: Hillsboro Cotton Mills

Historic Name: same

✓ Address: 220 North Houston St.

Date: 1899-1900

Present Owner: Lewis Smith, III, Bill R. Smith, Mrs. A.L. Smith, Jr., Andrew Smith, Ron R. Smith, Carolyn Smith, Mrs. Madelyn Rivers
921 East Franklin
Hillsboro, TX 76645

Block/Lot: See Verbal Boundary Description

Acreage: 4.2 acres

Current Use: Vacant

UTM Reference: 676170/3543180

Original Use: Commercial; textile mill

U.S.G.S. Quadrangle: Hillsboro West

Architectural Description:

Physical Condition: Good

Date(s) of Alterations: Exterior faced with brick (1907); two large rooms added to east end (1920); Renaissance-style dome over projected entrance bay destroyed by tornado (1960).

The main building of the Mills Complex is a two-story, vernacular, industrial building of brick with a rear north ell. It exhibits Romanesque Revival and Victorian Romanesque detailing. The structure consists of load-bearing masonry walls and a roof of plank-and-timber construction. The arcade of semicircular arched windows (12/12 lights) is crowned with brick trim on the upper level, while the row of 12/12 light windows on the first level exhibits brick relieving arches. Arcade windows are painted with a blue "blackout" screen originated during World War II. The exterior features a brick corbeled cornice, brick relief work between the upper and lower window bays, and cast-concrete details contrasting with the predominate red-brick exterior. The three-sided, two-story, bay entrance with four attached, cement, half-columns features concrete detailing such as belt courses, cornices, and window sills and lintels. The open bays of the interior are supported by chamfered wooden piers and beams, while an inverted metal king-post-truss arrangement runs the entire length of the building.

Note: Auxiliary structures and additions reflect a simple, vernacular, industrial design utilizing brick, wood frame, and corrugated tin. Contributing structures include: (1)warehouse no. 1 (1910); warehouse no. 2 (1915), with "opening room" and supply room addition (1918); office building (1918) with addition (1926); weaving-room and cloth-room additions to the main building, east end (1920); and the water tower (1920).

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
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received

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number all

Page 15

Significance:

Period: 1900-

Areas of Significance: Architecture, Industry

One of the earliest and most significant industries built in Hillsboro, the locally owned Hillsboro Cotton Mills and its operations were managed by four generations of the A.L. Smith family. The manufacturing firm, which reached peak operation during World War II, was the major employer in Hillsboro from 1904 until production ceased in 1971. The business, housed in an outstanding turn-of-the-century industrial building, played a vital role in Hillsboro's economic development.

Virtually from beginning to end, the cotton mill has been a family-owned business. After its founding in 1901 as the Hillsboro Cotton Mill Company, the firm was reorganized in 1904 as Hillsboro Cotton Mills, with a member of its board, A.L. Smith, becoming president and manager. Smith held that position until his death in 1930. His son, A.L. Smith, Jr., then became president, remaining in that capacity until he died in 1959. A.L. Smith, III then became president and his brother, Bill R. Smith, served as vice-president. Fourth generation Smith children are among the present owners of the property.

The Romanesque Revival style, popular for large buildings at the time, adapted well to the mill. The arcades created by fashioning windows within the semicircular arches provided ample light and ventilation for the operation. The more commanding Victorian Romanesque style allowed the entrance bay and office area to become focal point in the main building's facade. Though wired for electric lights in 1914, the mill provided its own steam power for the shaft and belt-driven machinery, and for fire-fighting equipment through many years until electric motors were installed. A complete machine shop made and repaired milling equipment on the site.

The property once contained tenement houses which were built for employees between 1905 and 1921. The last house was removed from the property in 1975. From an initial roll of 24 employees in 1901, the mill grew to employ 250 workers during its wartime peak in the 1940s. Some employees were third- and fourth-generation mill workers.

Bibliography:

Hillsboro Reporter, November 27, 1980.

Interview with Mrs. Bill R. Smith, Hillsboro, 1981.

Minutes of the Board of Directors, Hillsboro Cotton Mill Company, 1901-1904;
Minutes of the Board of Directors, Hillsboro Cotton Mills, 1904-1971.

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at the northeast corner of Paschal and Houston streets, proceed north 455 feet; turn 90 degrees east, proceed 405 feet; turn 90 degrees south, proceed 480 feet;

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date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number all

Page 16

turn 90 degrees west, proceed 135 feet; turn 90 degrees north, proceed 25 feet; turn 90 degrees west, proceed 260 feet to point of beginning.

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Inventory—Nomination Form

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2/15/84

date entered

Continuation sheet

Item number

Page 1 of 2

Multiple Resource Area
Thematic Group

dnr-11

Name Hillsboro Multiple Resource Area
State Hill County, TEXAS

Nomination/Type of Review

Date/Signature

1. Farmers National Bank

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvin Byers 3/30/84

Attest

2. Gebhardt Bakery

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvin Byers 3/30/84

Attest

3. Grimes House

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvin Byers 3/30/84

Attest

4. Grimes Garage

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvin Byers 3/30/84

Attest

5. Hill County Cotton Oil
Company

Substantive Review

Determined Eligible

DOE/OWNER OBJECTION

for Keeper

Eligible - Beth Grovorn 3/30/84

Attest

6. Hillsboro Cotton Mills

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvin Byers 3/30/84

Attest

7. Hillsboro Residential
Historic District

Substantive Review

for Keeper

Beth Grovorn 7/9/84

Attest

8. Old Rock Saloon

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvin Byers 3/30/84

Attest

9. Sturgis National Bank

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvin Byers 3/30/84

Attest

10. Tarlton Building

Entered in the
National Register

for Keeper

Melvin Byers 3/30/84

Attest

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
EVALUATION/RETURN SHEET

Hillsboro Cotton Mills (Hillsboro MRA)
Hill County
TEXAS

Working No. 2-15-84
Fed. Reg. Date: 2.5.85
Date Due: 3/15/84 ~~3/31/84~~
Action: ACCEPT 3/30/84
 RETURN
 REJECT
Federal Agency: _____

Entered in the
National Register

- resubmission
- nomination by person or local government
- owner objection
- appeal

Substantive Review: sample request appeal NR decision

Reviewer's comments:

Recom./Criteria _____
Reviewer _____
Discipline _____
Date _____
_____ see continuation sheet

Nomination returned for: _____ technical corrections cited below
_____ substantive reasons discussed below

1. Name

2. Location

3. Classification

Category	Ownership Public Acquisition	Status Accessible	Present Use
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4. Owner of Property

5. Location of Legal Description

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

Has this property been determined eligible? yes no

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input 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

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- alterations/integrity
- dates
- boundary selection

8. Significance

Period _____ Areas of Significance—Check and justify below

Specific dates _____ Builder/Architect _____

Statement of Significance *(in one paragraph)*

- summary paragraph
- completeness
- clarity
- applicable criteria
- justification of areas checked
- relating significance to the resource
- context
- relationship of integrity to significance
- justification of exception
- other

9. Major Bibliographical References

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property _____

Quadrangle name _____

UTM References _____

Verbal boundary description and justification _____

11. Form Prepared By

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

____ national ____ state ____ local

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title _____

date _____

13. Other

- Maps
- Photographs
- Other

Questions concerning this nomination may be directed to _____

Signed _____ Date _____ Phone: _____



Site 9
9 HILLSBORO COTTON MILL COMPANY
Historic Resources of Hillsboro
Hillsboro, Hill County, Texas
Site No. 9, Hillsboro Cotton Mill Co., north
Houston Street

Commission
Photographer: Linda Flory, December 1980
Negatives on file, Texas Historical Commission,
Austin

View: oblique of south elevation, camera facing
northeast
Photo 9 of 23

Please refer to the map in the
Multiple Property Cover Sheet
for this property

Multiple Property Cover Sheet Reference Number: 64000846