

State of North Carolina  
Division of Archives and History

Davidson COUNTY

# INDIVIDUAL PROPERTY FORM FOR

Welcome, N.C. QUAD

MULTIPLE RESOURCE OR  THEMATIC NOMINATION

## 1 NAME

HISTORIC Grimes-Crotts Mill, Eureka Mills

AND/OR COMMON

Crotts Mill, "Old Mill"

## 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER East bank of Yadkin River at end of Old Mill Farm  
Road, entrance W side of SR 1445

NOT FOR PUBLICATION  
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN Reedy Creek  VICINITY OF

STATE North Carolina CODE 037 COUNTY Davidson CODE 057

## 3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE <input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL <input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL <input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
	<u>N/A</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OTHER <u>storage</u>

## 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME Hattie Clapp and Samuel B. Clapp, Jr.

STREET & NUMBER  
Route 4, Box 577

CITY, TOWN Lexington VICINITY OF N.C. STATE 27292

## 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC. Davidson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN Lexington STATE North Carolina

## 6 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE  
Ruth Little, Consultant

ORGANIZATION Survey and Planning Branch DATE May 7, 1983

STREET & NUMBER Division of Archives and History TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN Raleigh, North Carolina 27611 STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Grimes-Crotts Mill is a two-and-one-half story frame grist mill perched on the steep east bank of the Yadkin River in the Reedy Creek section of Davidson County. The mill is supported on fieldstone and massive timber pilings, with criss-crossed reinforcing timbers between pilings. Although the exterior finish reflects the late nineteenth or early twentieth century when the mill was raised to its present height, much of the first floor framework is handhewn and pegged, and dates from the original period of construction between 1870 and 1880. The upper section of the mill is circular sawn and assembled with wire nails. The exterior brick chimney which heated the office area and the one-story porch stretching across the land elevation, sheltering the two entrances, are picturesque elements distinguishing the mill from the typical turn-of-the-century grist mill in North Carolina.

The exterior is covered with plain weatherboard and pierced randomly by six-pane single sash windows which slide sideways on inside wooden tracks. These windows are said to be 1930s replacements installed by the Storey family. A sheet metal roof with overhanging eaves covers the structure. The single stepped-shoulder exterior chimney, located in the center bay of the east elevation, is laid in random common bond. On each side of the chimney is a double door of Victorian design, each leaf with five flat panels. One door leads into the mill office, the other into the grinding area. The shed porch along this elevation has sturdy plain posts and a simple railing.

The interior spaces were altered after 1937 following the removal of the mill machinery. Only a few isolated remnants of the machinery, such as wooden chutes and bins, still remain. The office area was remodeled to function as an apartment, and partition walls were erected throughout the first floor to divide the space, probably originally one large area. An open-string stair ascends to the second floor along the south wall. The second floor is a large open space, undivided except for a screened sleeping area built in the center by Mr. Storey. A narrow open-string stair rises to the top level platform, supported on posts and occupying the attic area of the mill. From this level the river and surrounding countryside can be viewed through the bands of monitor windows recessed beneath the eaves.

Although no longer connected to the mill, the metal undershot wheel lies in the mud at the edge of the river. The stone "diversion dam" a few feet offshore is still visible at normal water levels. This dam diverted water into a mill race isolated from the main channel of the river by a sand bar. In the mud of the river bank just downstream (south) of the grist mill, some of the timber foundation piers of the saw mill which was part of the Eureka Mills complex in the early twentieth century are still visible.

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES      1870-1880                      BUILDER/ARCHITECT      unknown

#### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Grimes-Crotts Mill, located on the east bank of the Yadkin River just north of Reedy Creek on the western boundary of Davidson County, has been known variously during its one hundred-year existence as Grimes Mill, Eureka Mills, Crotts Mill, and, currently, as "Old Mill." It is the only remaining water-powered mill in the county, and the last of a number of such mills on the Yadkin River and its tributaries in Davidson County. Only the first story framework of the mill can be said to date to the original Grimes Mill on the Yadkin, built between 1870 and 1880, for the second story and most of the visible exterior architectural fabric represent expansion and renovation under the ownership of Franklin P. Crotts between 1890 and 1831, and of William and Helen Storey from 1936-1952.

#### CRITERIA ASSESSMENT

- A. As the sole remaining water-powered mill in Davidson County, the Grimes-Crotts Mill represents the last phase of water-power technology prior to the development of steam-powered roller mills in metropolitan areas of the county in the late nineteenth century.
- B. The Grimes-Crotts Mill is associated with the Grimes family, prominent in the milling industry throughout the nineteenth century in Davidson County. George Grimes, active from the late 1840s to 1890, founded the mill. Franklin P. Crotts was the miller from about 1890 to 1930.
- C. Embodies the evolution in the Piedmont of a late nineteenth century two-story frame mill dominated by such anomalies as the monitor roof and exterior facade chimney.

The earliest family known to have been associated with the mill, the Grimes, owned over 1,000 acres bordering Reedy Creek and the Yadkin River. Henry Grimes acquired this land between 1815 and his death in 1844, when it passed to his children. Inheritance deeds of 1844 and 1847 mention "the mill Road," "water reserved for the mill as it now runs," and "river lots."<sup>1</sup> George, one of Henry's children, inherited "the house lot of the old place," and "river lot number 6," and purchased his sister Chrissy Berrier's river lot.<sup>2</sup> According to local tradition he operated a mill near his homeplace on Reedy Creek.<sup>3</sup> This may have been the same mill referred to in his father's estate holdings. Grimes is listed as a twenty-one year old farmer in the 1850 United States Census.<sup>4</sup> The fact that he is not listed as a miller indicates that milling was probably a small share of his activity.

Confusion over the two mills owned by George Grimes, both known as "Grimes Mill," is resolved by the Yadkin Township listings in the Industrial Schedules of the United States Census. No listings for any Grimes Mills are included in the 1850 and 1860 schedules, but in the 1870 schedule both a grist mill and a sawmill owned by George Grimes are included. The grist mill, a large operation, had a capital investment of \$6,000, and kept an average of eleven employees busy grinding \$3,950 worth of grain on two sets of millstones during the year. The sawmill was a one-man operation with a capital investment of \$75 which produced 40,000 feet of lumber worth \$400 during the year.<sup>5</sup> The 1880 Industrial Schedule lists two grist mills owned by Grimes: one on Reedy Creek at its mouth on the Yadkin, and one on the Yadkin River itself. Both of these had \$1,500 worth of capital investment and employed an average of two employees. The Reedy Creek Mill had two turbine wheels, while the Yadkin Mill had one undershot wheel. In addition, Grimes operated a water-powered cotton gin on Reedy Creek with two employees. This ran for three months out of the year, producing \$600 worth of ginned cotton.<sup>6</sup> Thus the Reedy Creek Mill with two sets of wheels mentioned in the 1880 census is the same mill referred to in the 1870 census and perhaps the mill operated by Henry Grimes as early as the 1840s, and the Yadkin Mill listed in 1880 must have been built during this decade.

The earliest appearance of the Yadkin mill on extant maps is on the Soil Map of Davidson County of 1915, when the mill is shown as "Eureka Mills," and a ferry just downriver is shown as the "Ellis Ferry."<sup>7</sup> Some of the pilings for the ferry landings are still visible on both sides of the river.

By the late 1870s, both of George's sons, John D. and Thomas J. Grimes, had moved

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

See continuation sheet

## 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 13.20 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,7	55,681,0	3,975,310
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
c	1,7	55,680,0	3,974,900

B	1,7	55,691,0	3,975,290
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
d	1,7	55,65,8,0	3,974,900

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

That part of Map 7, Davidson County Tax Office, contained in Lot 7, bounded on the north by Lot 44, on the east by Lots 44 and 8, on the south by a portion of Lot 44, and on the west by the Yadkin River, forming the Davidson-Davie county line, as outlined in red on map.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
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to Lexington and established one of the first steam-powered grain mills in the county. In the late 1880s, their mill, known as the Excelsior, was producing seventy-five barrels of flour daily.<sup>8</sup> Thus by George Grimes' death in 1890, his river mill had become technologically obsolete. John D., Thomas J., and their sisters Mrs. D. H. Hinkle and Mrs. R. L. Penry inherited the mill and promptly sold it to Franklin P. Crotts.<sup>9</sup> Crotts, said to have been a long-time employee of the river mill, continued to operate it, and added an electrical generating plant and either added or continued to run a sawmill and cotton gin at the site. Local residents recall that he raised the mill to two and one-half stories about 1900, and that he sometimes cleared as much as \$2,500 annually in the early twentieth century.<sup>10</sup> He ran the mill until his death in 1931, when it was deeded to W. H. Thomason, husband of his daughter Sarah.<sup>11</sup> They lived in a house beside the mill and ran both the mill and the Yadkin River ferry until 1934, when their house was destroyed by fire and both the mill and ferry were discontinued.<sup>12</sup>

The modern, or "post-industrial" phase of the mill's history begins in 1936, when Helen M. Gilmore purchased the Crotts Mill property.<sup>13</sup> She later married W. M. Storey, a wealthy lumber mill owner from Winston, and they built a rambling home on the bluff overlooking the mill and operated a saddlebred horse farm on the property. In 1937 the mill machinery was sold and removed. During their ownership the Storeys reconditioned the mill as a picturesque landmark rather than a functioning business. The stone channel diverter dam in the river was dynamited, but traces still remain for identification.<sup>14</sup> Following the deaths of the Storeys in the early 1950s, Samuel B. Clapp, Sr., and his wife Hattie purchased the farm. Mrs. Clapp and her son Samuel Burton Clapp, Jr., continue to reside there and operate a horse farm.<sup>15</sup>

Footnotes

<sup>1</sup>Davidson County Deed Book 9, p. 331; Book 11, p. 180.

<sup>2</sup>Davidson County Deed Book 11, p. 39.

<sup>3</sup>M. Jewell Sink and Mary G. Matthews, "Old Mill Still Stands on Yadkin River Bank," The Lexington Dispatch, May 5, 1973.

<sup>4</sup>United States Census, 1850, Davidson County, North Carolina, Population Schedule.

<sup>5</sup>United States Census, 1870, Davidson County, North Carolina, Industrial Schedule, Yadkin Township.

<sup>6</sup>United States Census, 1880, Davidson County, North Carolina, Manufactures Schedule, Yadkin Township.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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<sup>7</sup>Soil Map of Davidson County, 1915, in Soil Survey of Davidson County, North Carolina (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1917).

<sup>8</sup>Sink and Matthews, "Old Mill Still Stands on Yadkin River Bank."

<sup>9</sup>Davidson County Deed Book 42, pp. 32-33, State Archives.

<sup>10</sup>Sink and Matthews.

<sup>11</sup>Davidson County Deed Book 116, p. 74.

<sup>12</sup>Sink and Matthews.

<sup>13</sup>Davidson County Deed Book 128, p. 333.

<sup>14</sup>Sink and Matthews; Davidson County Deed Book 233, p. 243.

<sup>15</sup>Interview with Mrs. Hattie Clapp and Samuel Burton Clapp, Jr. Reedy Creek Township, N.C. March 26, 1983.

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

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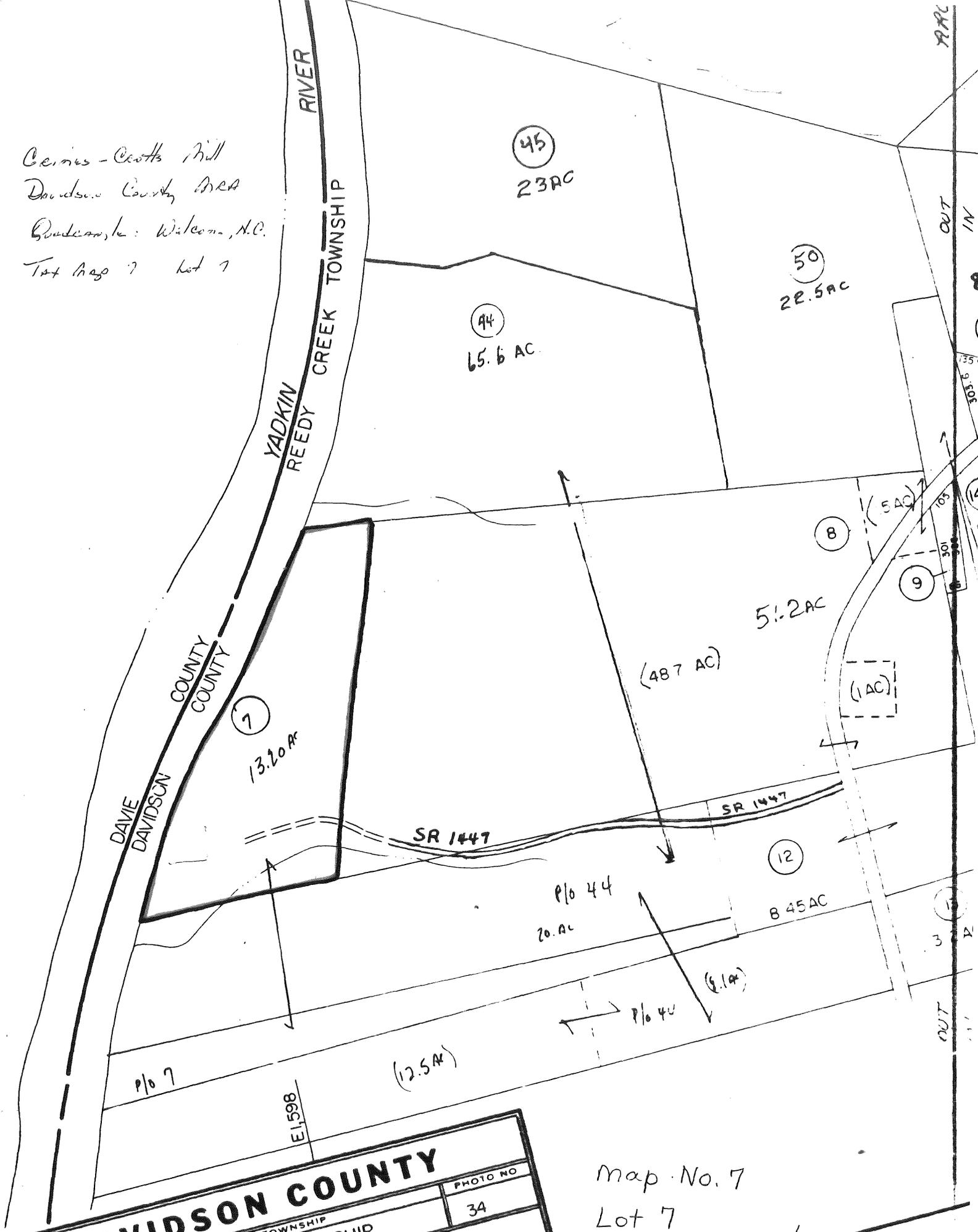
Davidson County Deed Books, State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Sink, M. Jewell and Matthews, Mary G. "Old Mill Still Stands on Yadkin River Bank," The Lexington Dispatch, 5 May 1973.

Soil Map of Davidson County, 1915, in Soil Survey of Davidson County, North Carolina. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1917.

United States Census, Industrial Schedule, 1870. Davidson County, North Carolina. Manufactures Schedule, 1880. Davidson County, North Carolina. State Archives, Division of Archives and History, Raleigh, North Carolina.

Census - Cotts Mill  
 Davidson County Area  
 Reedy Creek, W. of Wilson, N.C.  
 Tax Map 7 Lot 7



<b>DAVIDSON COUNTY</b>	
TOWN OR TOWNSHIP	PHOTO NO
REEDY CREEK TOWNSHIP	34
DATE	1963

Map No. 7  
 Lot 7  
 Scale 1" = 400'

