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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

JAN 05 1990

National Register of Historic Places
Registration Form

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations of eligibility for individual properties or districts. See instructions in *Guidelines for Completing National Register Forms* (National Register Bulletin 16). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the requested information. If an item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, styles, materials, and areas of significance, enter only the categories and subcategories listed in the instructions. For additional space use continuation sheets (Form 10-900a). Type all entries.

1. Name of Propertyhistoric name Klepzig, Walter, Mill and Farm
other names/site number _____**2. Location**street & number Ozark National Scenic Riverways (OZAR) ☐ not for publication
city, town Eminence ☒ vicinity
state Missouri code MO county Shannon code 203 zip code 65466**3. Classification**

Ownership of Property

- ☐
- private
-
- ☐
- public-local
-
- ☐
- public-State
-
- ☒
- public-Federal

Category of Property

- ☐
- building(s)
-
- ☒
- district
-
- ☐
- site
-
- ☐
- structure
-
- ☐
- object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing
<u>3</u>	<u>2</u> buildings
<u>3</u>	<u>1</u> sites
<u>1</u>	<u>1</u> structures
<u>0</u>	<u>0</u> objects
<u>7</u>	<u>4</u> Total

Name of related multiple property listing:

N/ANumber of contributing resources previously
listed in the National Register 0**4. State/Federal Agency Certification**

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this ☒ nomination ☐ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.

Signature of certifying official

Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property ☒ meets ☐ does not meet the National Register criteria. ☐ See continuation sheet.Signature of commenting or other official G. Tracy Mehan III, Director

Date

Department of Natural Resources and State Historic Preservation Officer

State or Federal agency and bureau

5. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby, certify that this property is:

- ☒ entered in the National Register.
☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined eligible for the National Register. ☐ See continuation sheet.
- ☐ determined not eligible for the National Register.
- ☐ removed from the National Register.
- ☐ other, (explain:)

Signature of the Keeper

Date of Action

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions (enter categories from instructions)
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/processing
AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE/agricultural field
DOMESTIC/single dwelling
DOMESTIC/secondary structure

Current Functions (enter categories from instructions)

LANDSCAPE/park
AGRICULTURE/agricultural field

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(enter categories from instructions)

OTHER: sawmill or box

Materials (enter categories from instructions)

foundation STONE: limestone
walls WOOD

roof METAL: iron
other CONCRETE

Describe present and historic physical appearance.

Summary Paragraph

The Klepzig Farm Complex is comprised of 121 acres of forested hillside and cleared bottomland flanking Rocky Creek in eastern Shannon County. The complex includes a structural cluster consisting of a mill (c. 1912) and its related hydraulic system (c. 1912-1935); a springhouse and smokehouse (c. 1920-1925); foundations of a 1923 farmhouse and c. 1920-1925 barn; and two post-1934 chicken coops and a ruin of a post-1934 machine shed. The building cluster is unchanged in location since before 1912 and its relationship to the landscape remains intact from the period of significance. The standing pre-1937 structures have been modified little, retaining the materials and characteristics associated with them during the 1912-1936 occupancy of the complex.

Setting

Rocky Creek is one of scores of small streams which flow through the deeply cut valleys of the southern Courtois Hills in southeastern Missouri. North of the present-day highway NN, just east of where Rocky Creek flows between two high bluffs (of Buzzard Mountain and Mill Mountain) in a narrow gorge -- regionally known as a "shut-in" -- it emerges into a valley, the floor of which is about sixty acres. It is in and adjacent to this valley that the complex is located. The structural cluster is located in the valley at an elevation of 600 feet. The closely surrounding hills rise sharply up to 1140 feet. The creek continues east and drops through another gorge approximately thirty feet deep and ninety feet wide. Scattered in this gorge are large rock formations around or over which the stream flows. The elevation at the mouth of Rocky Creek at the Current River, two miles to the east, is 540 feet. Though the rate of change in elevation here is slightly greater than the average, the terrain is generally typical of the southern Courtois Hill region.

Farm Complex

The farm complex, including the structural cluster, is located mostly on the relatively flat land east and south of Rocky Creek in Section 6. The site includes a year-round spring and is more than twenty feet above the level of the creek. In the period of significance, the surrounding hills were covered with a virgin pine and oak forest. In the late 1920s and the 1930s, owner Walter Klepzig (1912-1935) was

☒ See continuation sheet

8. Statement of Significance

Certifying official has considered the significance of this property in relation to other properties:

☐ nationally ☐ statewide ☒ locally

Applicable National Register Criteria ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D

Criteria Considerations (Exceptions) ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G

Areas of Significance (enter categories from instructions)

AGRICULTURE

ARCHITECTURE

COMMERCE

Period of Significance

1912-1936

Significant Dates

1912

1935

Cultural Affiliation

N/A

Significant Person

N/A

Architect/Builder

Klepzig, Walter

Brandt, Arthur C.

State significance of property, and justify criteria, criteria considerations, and areas and periods of significance noted above.

The Klepzig Mill is one of five extant mills in the portions of Reynolds, Shannon, Dent, Wayne, Oregon, and Carter counties within the Southern Courtois Hills region, the most rugged district within the Missouri Ozarks. The Klepzig is the only one of "sawmill" construction. The majority of the other mills have survived partly because of their unusual size for the region. They were built and/or operated as merchant roller mills, constructed or enlarged in the 1880s and later. Of the dozens of smaller, rural grist mills once in the region, only the Klepzig survives. The Klepzig farm is one of very few grist mill sites which continues to communicate the relationship between a small Ozark mill and the farm of which it is a part. It also illustrates a progression of such a complex through the second of three major periods of southeast Missouri Ozarks history, the "New South Ozarks." Thus the farm is significant for its representation of the combination of agriculture and commerce on a small New South Ozarks farm, and the mill is also significant for its architectural style as the only surviving representative of sawmill construction of a mill. Sawmill construction is a once-popular regional vernacular style. The farm and its mill are eligible for National Register inclusion under criteria "A" and "C."

Klepzig Farm

Rural Ozark grist mills were usually operated by the farmers who owned them as part of their self-sufficient farming endeavors. The Klepzig Mill today does not stand isolated as do each of the other mills still in the Southern Courtois Hills region. Surrounding the mill are other structures and a landscape substantially unchanged since the years of the mill's operation. The 78-acre grant originally made by the United States Government to David Reed in 1857 had been expanded to 121 acres prior to Walter Klepzig's 1912 purchase and the farm remained substantially the same size and configuration from 1890 until after 1935. When Walter Klepzig acquired the farm in 1912, improvements included a log cabin and the remains of a flood-destroyed mill. A poorly improved road led from the Current River to the farm and continued southwest toward Winona. The pre-1912 farm appears to have

☒ See continuation sheet

9. Major Bibliographical References

Klepzig, Claude, oral history interview, Ozark National Scenic Riverways, Van Buren, Missouri, October 21, 1986.
Center for Archeological Research, *Overview of Cultural Resources in the Mark Twain National Forest, Missouri*, Vol. 1. Prepared for the U.S. Forest Service, Southwest Missouri State University, Springfield, 1979.
Clendenen, Harbert Leslie, "Settlement Morphology of the Southern Courtois Hills, Missouri, 1820-1860," unpubl. Ph.D. dissertation, Louisiana State University, 1973.
Grant, Bill, personal interview with James Corless, Historian,, Ozark National Scenic Riverways, Van Buren, Missouri, November 18, 1988.
Knight, Stephen M., "Architectural Context Study; The Nichols Farm in Ozark National Scenic Riverways," draft. Omaha, Midwest Regional Office, National Park Service, 1986.

☐ See continuation sheet

Previous documentation on file (NPS):

- ☐ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
☐ previously listed in the National Register
☐ previously determined eligible by the National Register
☐ designated a National Historic Landmark
☐ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
☐ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary location of additional data:

- ☐ State historic preservation office
☐ Other State agency
☒ Federal agency
☐ Local government
☐ University
☐ Other

Specify repository:

Ozark National Scenic Riverways

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of property 121

UTM References

A 15 659540 4110540
Zone Easting Northing
C 15 659560 4109600

B 15 660390 4110510
Zone Easting Northing
D 15 660370 4109590

☐ See continuation sheet

Verbal Boundary Description In Shannon County, Missouri: A part of Sections 5 and 6, both in Township 28 North, Range 2 West of the Fifth Principal Meridian, being more particularly described as: W $\frac{1}{2}$ L2 NW $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 5, E $\frac{1}{2}$ L1&2 NE $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 6, and all that part of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ Sec. 6 described as follows: Beginning at the northwest corner of said northeast quarter of the southeast quarter thence running 7 chains to the creek, thence south, 2 degrees east, 1.85 chains, thence south 84 degrees east, 7.71 chains to section line 6.34 chains to beginning.

☐ See continuation sheet

Boundary Justification The district is outlined by property lines consistent from 1909 to 1936, as described above. The mill's significance is derived in great part from its place within the greater farm complex (as described in Section 8). Equally, the farm's significance is derived from the landscape, natural and cultural, which shaped it. Without understanding the immediate environment -- the lack of large amounts of cultivatable land on such a farm and the ruggedness of the immediate terrain -- the farm can not be completely understood. Thus the landscape components of what was understood to be "the farm" are included.

☐ See continuation sheet

11. Form Prepared By

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organization National Park Service
street & number P.O. Box 490
city or town Van Buren

date February 15, 1989
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cutting trees on the property for farm use and hewing railroad ties from the oak. After Klepzig's sale of the farm, the timber was cut over and now a second growth pine and oak forest covers the hills.

Approximately forty acres of cleared land is adjacent to the house site and outbuildings. This field remains the same size as in the period of significance, but two subsequent tree rows and fence lines and the disappearance of a small peach orchard and most original fencing have unsubstantially modified its appearance. An additional much smaller cleared field is one-quarter mile east, on the south side of the creek. Klepzig planted row crops and hay and maintained some fields as pastures. The row crops were replaced with pasturage after Klepzig's sale in 1935, and since the National Park Service acquired the property in 1974 all of the fields have been planted in hay. Connecting the two fields is a ten-foot wide dirt road in the same (or for a distance closely paralleling the same) location of a road partially constructed by Klepzig. It arrives at the farm in a northeasterly direction from its intersection with Route H three miles away. It fords Rocky Creek and continues through the complex, separating the dwelling site from the creek and mill site. It then continues past the small east field and on to intersect with Route NN one mile farther. East of the complex the road is improved and occasionally graded.

Paralleling and immediately adjacent to the current road from the ford to the house site (860 feet) is an older overgrown and pre-1935 fence-bordered five-foot wide dirt road which dates to the Klepzig era. Intersecting with the current road just east of the house site is a well-preserved 230-foot section of pre-1912 road which leads to the mill and continues northeast to again ford Rocky Creek. It is presently used as part of the Ozark Trail. Additional small segments of this road are barely visible on the north side of the creek and at an additional ford where it re-crossed to the south bank and continued through the east field. This earliest route to and through the farm is identifiable by these surviving segments. A quarter-mile section of the current road, from the east field to the intersection with the older road coming from the mill, was first constructed by Klepzig and his neighbors. The segment of current road running west from that intersection veers north from the road of Klepzig's era by up to fifteen feet, slightly affecting the spatial relationship between the house, barn, and the road. The pre-1935 road sections are a contributing structure; the newer road is a non-contributing structure.

Overall, however, the spatial relationship between fields, structural cluster, creek, and the surrounding forested hills is retained from the period of significance, and no structures are outside the cluster established prior to 1935. The landscape is a contributing site.

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Klepzig Mill

The mill (List of Classified Structures [LCS] number 06484) survives in the location Walter Klepzig moved it about 1928. It is on the steep south bank of Rocky Creek, 700 feet northeast of the house site. The original 12' X 20' single-story building was appended with a 7'3" X 9'2" extension by A.C. Brandt (owner, 1935-1974) resulting in an ell configuration. Its construction type is locally known as "sawmill" or "box" reflecting its construction without framing of vertical boards nailed to a sill at the top and bottom, and with corner boards nailed together. The original portion is of 10- to 13-inch boards, while the addition is of 4- to 12-inch boards. The exterior of both sections has battens and traces of silver paint. The south wall rests on grade on a rubble-stone foundation wall, while the remainder of the structure is supported by various dimension timber posts. The gable roof is covered with corrugated iron. On the south face is a 31-inch three-board plank door remaining. An additional 11-1/2-inch single-board door is 46 inches east. The smaller door utilizes a scrap metal hinge, possibly from the hood of a Model "A" Ford truck. In front of the larger door are fragments of a wood loading platform. One window punctuates each of the east and west walls and the east wall of the ell. A 23-inch door opening, likely not from the Klepzig era, is in the north wall. Inside, the original building and add-on forebay are open as one room, with the top of the concrete turbine well in the forebay. A meal storage bin (c. 1928-30) is built onto the east wall. On the bin are a switch and wiring surviving from the electric generator once housed in the mill.

Condition: Good, having been stabilized and partially restored by the National Park Service in 1987. Some detail elements such as window sashes and screens are missing. The loading porch has all but disappeared. All milling and electric generation equipment has been removed with the exception of the turbine and its shafts (the mill stones are in the possession of the National Park Service but not at the site).

Integrity: The mill building is substantially the same as constructed (c. 1912), with the exceptions of the added forebay shed and the post-1944 metal roof. The shed extension was likely added in 1936 utilizing the same construction method as the original, but with generally smaller boards. The 1987 stabilization involved the in-kind replacement of several support posts and about a dozen missing vertical boards and the stabilization of the stone foundation wall. Evidence of both pre-and post-1935 use remains intact. The mill was moved to its current location during its most significant era and is at the location of the earliest known milling activities at the site. Its relationship with the early road and the remainder of the complex

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remains clearly evident. It, with its hydraulic system, is a contributing building.

Hydraulic System

The hydraulic system consists of a ninety-foot dam which utilizes reinforced concrete to fill gaps between natural rock formations across the creek channel. A steel sluice gate in the dam leads to a small holding pond and on to another sluice gate at the entrance to a narrow sixty-foot-long concrete and natural rock race which ends at the fourteen-foot-high concrete turbine well under the mill shed. The well has an inside diameter of 48 inches. At its bottom is a ten-inch James Leffel Sampson turbine.

Condition: The dam is badly eroded, with large sections missing. The race is also in poor condition, but substantial remains clearly mark its course. The turbine well and turbine are in very good condition.

Integrity: The turbine and well survive from Klepzig's construction. The dam and race were built by A.. Brandt in 1935-36 to replace Klepzig's less substantial masonry and wood components. All components are similar in location to their pre-1912 equivalents, except the dam which is slightly (less than twenty feet) west of earlier locations.

Other Standing Structures

Springhouse (LCS-06482): Single-story, 8' x 14' "sawmill" structure, 575 feet east of house site. Has: post-1944 corrugated-iron covered gable roof; rough-sawn clapboards over most of exterior planks; partial concrete foundation with concrete storage trough; a single door into the south room and single windows on the west and east walls of the north room; remnants of an interior dividing wall; and widely spaced vertical boards covered with chicken wire as the walls of the south room. The structure was painted white. Fair condition, with about half the clapboards removed.

Smokehouse (LCS 06480): Single-story 14' x 16' "sawmill" structure, 20 feet southeast of house site. Has: corrugated-iron covered gable roof; concrete foundation; standing-height root cellar; a single window on the north and south walls; a wood floor; a loft, and a 3' x 4' plank-walled room in the northeast corner; two plank doors, one with four concrete outside steps up to it, one with three concrete and three wood inside steps down into the cellar. The cellar has one four-light window on the south wall, and a small hinged door on the north foundation wall. It is in good condition.

Chicken Laying House: 8-1/2' x 16-1/2', "sawmill" structure 100 feet southeast of house site. Interior dividing wall is of single-width

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horizontal boards. It has a 6 x 8 inch timber foundation. It is in poor condition with the south wall being nearly completely destroyed. An additional chicken coop is a converted panel truck body which has electric lighting components installed.

Integrity: The springhouse and smokehouse, with the exception of their metal roofs, are largely unchanged since their construction by Klepzig. Their relation to the house site remains evident. They are contributing buildings. The chicken coops date to the Brandt era and are located differently than Klepzig's whose were southwest of the house toward the equipment shed. The "sawmill" coop and truck body are counted as non-contributing buildings.

Identifiable Structural Sites

Incendiary fires at the complex in recent years have resulted in the loss of four significant structures. Two of them, however, are well represented in the structural complex by their complete foundations.

Klepzig House (LCS 06476): This 1-1/2-story frame 24' x 28' house, built in 1923 on the site of the pre-1912 log cabin, is represented by the 4-1/2' high foundation walls, the 10' x 12' concrete front porch with its ornamental stairs, and the concrete chimney and brick-lined fireplace. The foundation is in fair condition and is easily visible from the road and other farm structures. It is this house from which other district resources have been measured.

Klepzig Barn (LCS 06479): The 2-1/2-story, 24' x 35' structure is represented by its 6 to 30 inch high concrete foundation walls, a concrete milking pad, and the stone foundation of a shed extension. The ruin is in good condition and is visible from the road. It is 275 feet east of the house site.

Stock Shed (LCS 07481): This single-story 16' x 24' log and frame structure was located about 100 feet east of the house. It rested on wood sills on stone piers, and its site is located by surface topography and foundation pier remnants.

Brandt House: This 1936, 2400-sq. ft. two-story log house is marked today only by surviving ornamental shrubbery. It was 600 feet east of the Klepzig house and about 300 feet southwest of the mill (which was converted in 1935 to supply electricity to the Brandt house and farm). This house was separated from the original structural complex -- the Klepzig house and outbuildings -- by a wooded area and small ravine.

Integrity: The Klepzig house and barn sites are easily located, contributing to the understanding of spatial relationships on the farm. These ruins are contributing sites. The stock shed and Brandt

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house sites are not evident features of the overall landscape and are not counted as individual resources.

Other ruins

Three additional Brandt-era chicken brooder houses were in a straight 130-foot line south of the standing laying house. Also, 200 feet south of the house site was a post-1936 Brandt-era 32' x 34' farm-machine shed (LCS 06478). These buildings have collapsed and the resulting debris will likely be removed from the site. The machine shed will be marked by its concrete and stone foundations, and is a non-contributing site.

Overall Integrity

Standing at the Klepzig mill or house site today, one will see in any direction essentially the same vista viewed in 1930. The outline of the 1930 fields remain with the same forested hills surrounding them. The structural cluster is related to the fields in the same manner, with however the house and barn missing (though their past presence and importance are made known by their foundations), and with only minor additions to the cluster. The extensive use of regionally-common sawmill construction techniques is illustrated in the well-preserved mill and smokehouse. Most importantly, the relationship of the mill to the farm complex, and the mill and farm to the rugged topography, including the bottomland fields, the fast-flowing creek, the still-running spring, and hillside forests, is preserved. It is these relationships and the feeling they evoke that are the essence of this property, as they quickly and assertively demonstrate that the mill was not isolated but was part of a farm operation which itself was shaped and limited by its environment.

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been laid out according to traditional criteria, with the house in close proximity to a spring and located 20 to 100 feet above the valley floor, and with only a very small number of its 121 acres cleared or even potentially available for cultivation. The location's suitability as a mill seat was likely immediately apparent to early owners. Most stream beds in the area were too choked with chert gravel to build dams, but fast flowing spring branches and narrow shut-ins were ideal mill sites.² The per acre price of the farm varied widely from its second sale in 1877 (\$10.00) to Klepzig's purchase in 1912 (\$5.50), reaching a low of one dollar in 1890. Perhaps the fluctuations in part reflected the existence and condition of the pre-1912 mill. Among the farm's early owners were G.W. McCaskill and Joshua Sholar, two local leaders in the New South Ozarks era sparked by the timber boom and the introduction of the railroad into the region. McCaskill was one of three ambitious native Shannon County brothers who built and operated numerous grist- and sawmills and other large-scale commercial enterprises in the area. He purchased this farm in 1890, only three years before he bought at auction a similar small gristmill and farm at Alley, Missouri, where he constructed a modern roller mill. The Rocky Creek farm must have appealed to him as an excellent mill site. However, only two months after his purchase he sold the Rocky Creek farm. Joshua Sholar bought it eight months later and kept it until 1898, part of which time he was editor of the Current Wave in Shannon County. As editor, in 1896, he wrote deploring the reluctance of Shannon County farmers to join the new, i.e. the New South, business order. He advocated increased crop production and the conversion of excess grain to flour and meal for market sales.³ It is not unlikely that a mill was in place by the 1890-1898 ownership of the farm by McCaskill and Sholar. Local legend substantiates that the mill had been there for years before the 1895 "Winona flood." The price per acre of the farm remained at a high \$6.50 through three transactions during this period.

Walter Klepzig made further improvements after his 1912 purchase. Additional acreage was cleared, but still only about 45 acres were suitable for cultivation. In addition to the reconstruction of the mill, the road to the farm and mill was greatly improved, a new house equal to any house "in town" replaced the log cabin, and a springhouse and large milking barn were constructed. Klepzig, son of "Prussian German" Charles Klepzig, another Shannon County entrepreneur, also was influenced by the New South business order. Among his neighbors he was first to introduce both barbed and woven wire fence and a refined breed of milk cow, and to take advantage of outside marketing opportunities such as shipping cream to Beatrice, Nebraska, for processing. With his progressive agricultural methods and his mill running at times to near capacity, the family enjoyed a simple prosperity that allowed them small luxuries such as the first radio

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"in the country." However, their life remained typically Ozark as well. Like their neighbors, the Klepzigs' diet was primarily cornbread, with some flour biscuits "of a morning." Walter's son, Claude, recalls the hike along the shut-ins to his one-room school as being "bad on sore toes." Trading was done in the closest town, Winona, but only about four times a year. Oak trees were cut from the farm and railroad ties hewed from them as an additional source of cash income. Self-sufficiency was still a must -- Klepzig had his own blacksmith shop and was an excellent carpenter, but he also found it necessary to hire out as a carpenter on many building projects in the region. He sawed boards for his new house and barn at the mill, adding extra horsepower to his turbine from the axle of a Ford truck belonging to another of his sons. Ozark neighborliness also endured. Klepzig routinely bought "good boards" for use in building coffins for his neighbors and he frequently ground corn without toll for neighbors "on starvation."⁴

Walter moved to a new farm closer to a mail route in 1925, leaving the Rocky Creek farm in the care of a son. The mill was operated through 1930, when younger son Claude at fifteen years of age rented it from his father for its last year of operation. His customers included neighbors and transient timber workers who were "squatting" on nearby timber land and cutting trees for gasoline-powered portable saws set up in the small hollows. In 1931, the whole place was rented out, and in 1935 it was traded for land in Dent County. It was soon after purchased by A.C. Brandt, a St. Louis electrical equipment supplier. Brandt modernized the farm but only slightly affected the historic fabric and landscape. In 1935-1936 the dam and race were improved and the turbine well was covered by a vertical board "ell" added to the mill shed. Later, new fences were added, wood roof shingles were replaced with metal, additional farm buildings were constructed, and the road in front of the house was moved a few yards toward the creek. Additional acreage also was acquired. Claude Klepzig, who helped move the Brandts from St. Louis, believes they came to the farm to retire. "They just liked it down here. First they were coming down maybe once or twice a year for a month or three weeks and then later moved permanently down here."⁵ The Brandts represent a new invasion into these rugged hills -- that of large, lasting outside influences. Government was one of these, the influx of urban sportsmen and recreationists another. Two changes to the farm reflect the transition into the third period of Ozarks history -- the "Cosmopolitan Ozarks" -- and the Brandts' purpose here. A new four-bedroom house with a 38' x 10' "dormitory" on the second floor was built in 1936. The house was of a re-created rustic log construction and was representative of numerous recreational and sporting lodges and cabins built along the Current River in the early twentieth century. The house was lighted by a generator which replaced the

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grist milling equipment in the mill shed, the second significant change. Walter Klepzig is the most significant of the two builders.

The Klepzig Mill

The mill, known as the Klepzig Mill, is significant on its own merits. Constructed c. 1912 to replace an earlier mill building at the same general site, it is representative of the many grist mills which dotted the Ozark landscape in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Each such mill reflected the environment and era in which it was constructed and operated, the intentions of its owners, and the needs of the surrounding populace.

Except in the case of the occasional steam-, and later, gasoline-powered mills, a consistent source of running water was required to operate these rural mills. Such sources were plentiful in the spring-rich Ozarks. But mill seats were also separated by the rugged terrain which slowed cross-country traveling. The Klepzig Mill is located at an ideal mill seat along a narrow section of Rocky Creek, where the creek's waters drop through a series of narrow gorges, regionally known as "shut-ins." The narrow gorge made damming the creek easier, and the quick drop in elevation provided the required force to the water's flow. Early mills on this site utilized a twelve-foot overshot wheel to capture the water's energy. From 1912 to 1930, Walter Klepzig upgraded both the hydraulic system and the mill, changes compatible with his progressive farming practices. The improvements included the replacement of the wheel with a more modern secondhand turbine and the updating of the mill stones. He also rebuilt the mill shed and later moved it adjacent to the new turbine well to improve the efficiency of the power transfer to the stones.

The three-bushel-an-hour mill provided additional income to its self-sufficient-farmer owner. It served as a custom mill, grinding corn into meal and returning all but a 1/8th toll to the customer. Klepzig operated the mill three days each week, often from dawn to after sunset on Saturdays, but business was sometimes much slower during the week. His customers included farmers from a radius of more than ten miles, a common situation in the Southern Courtois Hills where mills were often greater than fifteen miles apart. The improvements he made perhaps made his a more popular mill and they allowed him to increase the mill's capacity. He also used the mill's power to operate a saw and a shingle mill to produce materials for new structures on his farm. After the farm and mill were sold to A.C. Brandt in 1935, the turbine was used to power an electric generator housed in the mill shed. The mill's commercial potential was waning, as store-bought meal was increasingly available and utilized, and flour was increasing in popularity. The change represented not only the decreased demand for corn milling, but also the intentions of occupancy of the new

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owner. Brandt, who was retiring here, found the shut-in area useful for its beauty as well as its potential for power.

Architecture

The mill shed built by Klepzig was constructed in a vernacular style regionally common during the timber era of 1880-1920. Known as "sawmill" and sometimes "box" construction, the structure is built of vertical boards and battens nailed to a top and bottom sill with no framing. The style is also found in the farm's smokehouse and springhouse, both constructed near the same time. This style of construction is rare among extant mills. For professional historical millwright Derek Ogden, the Klepzig mill is the only known example of sawmill construction in a mill anywhere in the United States.⁶

Conclusion

A. C. Brandt's purchase and modification of the mill and farm culminates the continuum of the complex from the Old Ozarks Frontier - the farm in its earliest form -- through the New South Ozarks represented in the maximization of the farm's potential by McCaskill, Sholar, and most completely by Klepzig, to the Cosmopolitan Ozarks where change has come most rapidly to the region. The principal features -- mill seat; mill, dam, and race; Klepzig house foundation; the outbuildings; and landscape -- remain in context to illustrate the second phase and beginning of the third phase of this continuum.

The key to the significance of this complex is in its integrity of context. The mill was an important component to the farm's "new business order" operation -- a part of its commercial activities, benefitting both its owner and his customers. Both the farm and mill were greatly influenced by the rugged topography of the immediate and larger Ozark environment. The farm was limited in productivity by the scarcity of arable land, as seen in the small acreage in crops compared to the large amount of less useful forest land. The forest itself contributed to the farm's economy. Mills were necessarily located according to environmental criteria, and it was natural that owners of this property, when progress was sought, would seek to capitalize on the commercial potential of a mill. It was also the environment, with its rugged topography which limited access to the mill, that prevented it from being a great commercial success while allowing it to at least moderately increase the standard of living for its owner. The farm with its mill most completely represents a rural response to the New South Ozarks environment and also illustrates in the moderate change in its use the threshold of the Cosmopolitan Ozarks.

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1. Dr. Robert Flanders identifies these three periods as the Old Ozarks Frontier, the New South Ozarks, and the Cosmopolitan Ozarks, in: Cultural Resources Overview in the Mark Twain National Forest, Missouri. (Center for Archeological Resources, Southwest Missouri State University, Springfield, 1979) Vol. I, App. G.
 2. H.L. Clendenen, "Settlement Morphology of the Southern Courtois Hills, Missouri, 1820-1860." (Unpublished Ph.D. dissertation, Louisiana State University, 1973), pp. 72-74.
 3. Robert Flanders, "Alley, An Ozarks Hamlet, 1890-1925; Society, Economy, Landscape." (Center for Ozark Studies, Southwest Missouri State University, Springfield, 1985), pp. 23-24.
 4. Claude Klepzig, Farmington, Missouri; personal interview with James Corless, Historian, Ozark National Scenic Riverways, October 21, 1986.
 5. Ibid.
 6. Derek Ogden, "Klepzig Mill; Shannon County, Missouri." (Prepared for the National Park Service, Ozark National Scenic Riverways, November, 1984.)

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Page 1

Klepzig, Walter, Mill and Farm

The label information for elements 1,2,3, and 5 is consistent for all photographs:

1. Klepzig, Walter, Mill and Farm
2. Eminence, Shannon County, Missouri
3. Photographer: James P. Corless
5. Negative: Ozark National Scenic Riverways
P.O. Box 490
Van Buren, Missouri 63965

Photograph 1- 1. Klepzig Mill
4. March 1988
6. Mill exterior (sketch map feature 1) from south (from old road)

Photograph 2- 1. Klepzig Mill
4. March 1988
6. Mill (feature 1), dam and race (feature 15) in foreground, from northwest

Photograph 3- 1. Klepzig Mill
4. October 1988
6. Mill (feature 1) interior, with view of upper turbine shaft in forebay, generator platform, and corner of meal box, from interior southeast corner

Photograph 4- 1. Springhouse
4. December 1986
6. Springhouse (feature 2) from west

Photograph 5- 1. Farm equipment shed ruins, smokehouse, landscape elements
4. December 1986
6. Smokehouse (feature 6), farm equipment shed ruins (feature 13), tree and fence row, forested hillside on north side of Rocky Creek, from south

Photograph 6- 1. Smokehouse and Klepzig House foundation
4. December 1986
6. Smokehouse (feature 6) with Klepzig House foundation and chimney (feature 3), from northwest

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- Photograph 7- 1. Present road
4. December 1986
6. Existing dirt road (feature 16) north of features 3, 5, and 4, from west
- Photograph 8- 1. Old road segment
4. June 1988
6. Two parallel fence rows line the depression of pre-Klepzig and Klepzig era road segment (feature 14) west of Klepzig House (feature 3), from north from present road (feature 16)
- Photograph 9- 1. Rocky Creek
4. June 1988
6. Rocky gorge of creek immediately north of mill (feature 1), illustrating the fall in elevation providing for water power required to operate mill, view from east (downstream)

















