

Historic Name: Oxford (Flour) Mill Ruins		County: Goodhue
Common Name: Oxford (Flour) Mill Ruins		Community: Stanton Township <i>Cannon Falls, Minn.</i>
Owner's Name and Address: Robert Cook Route 1 Cannon Falls, Minnesota 55009		Address/Legal Desc.: 1 mile west of Highway 52.
Classification:		Acreage:
Building <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Structure _____ Object _____ District _____		1.7 acre approximately
Condition: See Description		Verbal Boundary Desc.: Begin at the northwest corner of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ of section 25, T112N, R18W., thence east 250 ft. thence south 300 ft. more or less to the Little Cannon River; thence west along the bank of the river 250 ft. more or less to the west line of the NE $\frac{1}{4}$ of the SE $\frac{1}{4}$ (continued)
Excellent _____ Good _____ Fair _____ Deteriorated _____		
Open to the Public: Yes _____ No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Visible from the road: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No _____	
Occupied: Yes _____ No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Present Use: none	
History:		UTM Reference:
Date Constructed: 1878	Original Owner: Mr. Wilcox	15 / 505480 / 4924360
Architect/Builder: unknown	Original Use: flour mill	Sogn Quadrangle
Description: The Oxford Mill Ruins are located near the bank of the Little Cannon River, in the southeast quarter of the southwest quarter of Section 25, Stanton Township. What remains of the Oxford Mill are the virtually intact outer walls of the structure. They are built of yellow-brown Platteville limestone, quarried from a hill a mile or so away. Measuring 44 by 56 feet at the base, these load-bearing masonry walls still rise the full four stories of the original structure (it is built into the roadbank, so that it appears to be only three stories tall in front), despite the fire of 1905 that completely gutted the interior and destroyed the roof. With irregular fenestration, the mill is three bays wide and four bays deep. Besides doors and windows, the walls also contain openings for such milling machinery as the water wheel, (continued)		Level of Significance: Local _____ State <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> _____ Nation _____
Significance: The Oxford Mill Ruins are significant both as the sole survivor of the flour-milling industry that once played so important a role in Goodhue County History, and as the best-preserved example of a "Cannon Valley" mill. When it was built by a Mr. Wilcox in 1878, the Oxford Mill was part of the wheat boom that was sweeping the region. Starting in the 1860's, wheat grew to become the principal crop throughout southeastern Minnesota, and every year brought larger harvests. To process this crop, flour mills sprang up along every river and stream, with 27 appearing in Goodhue County, alone, by 1900. The Oxford Mill (actually the second of its name, replacing an older, smaller mill that had stood nearby) was built at the very crest of the wheat boom, which peaked in 1879, a year later. Thereafter, wheat production declined sharply, and with it the flour-milling industry. By the time the Oxford Mill was gutted by fire in 1905, most of the small (continued)		Status: Survey _____ Date _____ Local _____ 10/73 _____ State _____ 3/78 _____ Nat'l. Reg. _____ Nat'l. Land. _____ HABS/HAER _____
		Theme/s: Primary <u>Industry</u> Secondary _____ Other _____
		Local Contact/Org.: Frances Haglund Fifth St. Cannon Falls, MN 55009
		Prepared by and date: B. Michael Zuckerman October 1978

MINNESOTA HISTORIC PROPERTIES INVENTORY FORM

Description:

shaker conveyor, and slatted-conveyor. On the interior, there is much evidence of the original construction, with metal tie-rods and square depressions for the floor and ceiling beams being clearly visible.

Besides the remarkably-preserved shell of the mill, the Oxford Mill Ruins also encompasses a site which, at least to the west of the roadway, has been largely undisturbed. Not only does this site contain much of the original water-works system, including the sluiceway, wheel pit, and tail race, but it also has the foundations of the grain cleaning house that once stood to the north of the main building.

Significance:

country mills had already gone out of business. It is not surprising, therefore, that its owner decided not to rebuild the still basically sound structure.

Besides its significance in representing this aspect of Goodhue County history, the Oxford Mill Ruins also have a larger importance as one of the few remaining examples of a Cannon Valley mill. In the latter third of the 19th century, it was part of a community of flour mills that grew up along the Cannon River and its tributaries. This group played a major role in the history of flour-milling technology, gradually developing slow-speed, high grinding techniques and forms of air blast middlings purifiers.

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION:

of the SW $\frac{1}{4}$ sec. 25; thence north 300 ft more or less to the beginning.