

PH 0501182

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JUL 19 1977

DATE ENTERED

JAN 5 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

Wolf Pen Branch Mill

AND/OR COMMON

Same

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

Wolf Pen Branch Road

NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Harrods Creek *vic.* VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3

STATE

Kentucky

CODE

021

COUNTY

Jefferson

CODE

111

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

OWNERSHIP

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

STATUS

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

PRESENT USE

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERICAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER: **not in use at present**

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mr. Robin Cooper and Mr. William F. Cooper

STREET & NUMBER

3404 Woodside Road

8213 Wolf Pen Branch Road

CITY, TOWN

Louisville

Prospect, Ky. 40059  
VICINITY OF

STATE

Kentucky

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Jefferson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

6th and Jefferson Streets

CITY, TOWN

Louisville

STATE

Kentucky

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky

DATE

1971

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN

Frankfort

STATE

Kentucky

## 7 DESCRIPTION

### CONDITION

EXCELLENT  
 GOOD  
 FAIR

DETERIORATED  
 RUINS  
 UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

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DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Located in eastern Jefferson County, the Wolf Pen Branch Mill is situated in a rural setting surrounded by trees on Wolf Pen Branch, a tributary of Harrod's Creek. Built into the east bank on a ledge of a ten foot water fall, the mill is constructed of roughly shaped field stone and laid in random courses without mortar. Although the structure is four stories high, only the third and fourth floors are exposed from the east bank. The 26' overshot wooden water wheel is located on the north side of the mill and spans the distance from the bottom of the falls to the second floor level.

The front entrance, composed of a Dutch door, is located in the center of the east gable end and is on the level of the east bank. Six-over-six pane sash windows flank the entrance, as well as a six-over-six opening directly above it in the gable. The gables at both the east and west ends are clapboarded. The small square window centered in the east gable end comprises the only opening on that side. There are no windows on the south side, but a narrow interior brick smoke stack interrupts the roof line on this side toward the east. On the north side, a single opening is placed in the third story overlooking the wheel, with two windows spaced below on the second floor. At the creek level, below the second floor openings, is a space enclosed with vertical boards with a segmental arch above and a small six pane window. The wooden jackshaft, which fits into a notched wheel inside the water wheel, extends into the mill at this point.

The mill pond's flow is regulated by a sluice gate and is located about an eighth of a mile upstream from the mill. The mill race, a narrow chanel, which is controlled by large valves, is located along the east bank. The channel flows above ground until it reaches the mill, at which point it goes below ground and runs out a long metal pipe which is suspended above the wheel, causing it to turn. When at top speed, the wheel makes approximately five or six revolutions a minute.

When the water wheel revolves, the jackshaft rotates, causing the buhrs, or grinding stones, in the second level of the mill to turn, grinding the corn into meal. The bedstone, or lower stone, remains stationary, while the upper, or runner stone, rotates. The corn is shelled by a water powered sheller at this level. Hoppers, or bins, are also located on the second floor. A narrow conveyor carries the ground corn to the bolter on the fourth floor where the bran is removed. The flour comes out on the third floor, or ground level, where it is bagged.

Although the mill has not been operated commercially for many years, the machinery remains in good working order and is operated on occasions.

# 8 SIGNIFICANCE

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 LATE 1850s (?) BUILDER/ARCHITECT

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Built in the mid-1800s, the Wolf Pen Branch Mill, twelve miles east of Louisville, is the oldest surviving industrial structure in Jefferson County. The mill was built by Herman Miller on the site of an earlier log or frame mill which was destroyed by a flood in the 1850s.

The earliest deed to the mill property, traced to the early 1800s, refers to it as the Postlewaite or Jacob Trace Mill, which served the farmers that lived in the area until the late 1850s when it was destroyed by a flood. (A mill is indicated on an 1856 map of Jefferson County near the location of the present mill.)

The original mill was replaced by the present stone structure. According to tradition the owner and builder of the mill, Herman Miller, raised the money to rebuild the mill by the cultivation and sale of butterbeans. Upon the death of Miller, the mill was operated by his son, Henry, until the early 1900s.

In 1925 the Wolf Pen Branch Mill was purchased by Mrs. Eve Lee Smith Cooper, daughter of Milton Smith, a past president of the Louisville and Nashville Railroad. Although Mrs. Cooper returned the mill to working order, she did not operate it commercially. It was only operated occasionally. The mill is presently owned by her sons.

At the present time the mill, in its original unaltered setting, retains its original machinery and remains in good working order and is significant as the oldest intact industrial structure in the area.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Atlas of Jefferson and Oldham Counties, Kentucky. Philadelphia: Beers & Lanagan, 1879.

Coleman, John Winston. Historic Kentucky. Lexington: Henry Clay Press, 1968. pp. 8-9

Franke, Wilhelmine. "Domestic Pageant in Old Kentucky - Wolf Pen Mill." On file at the Filson Club, 118 W. Breckinridge Street, Louisville, Ky. 40203 (continued)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,6	6,2,2,6,8,0	4,2,4,3,1,7,0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Mary Cronan Oppel, Historian

ORGANIZATION

Kentucky Heritage Commission

DATE

July

STREET & NUMBER

104 Bridge Street

TELEPHONE

564-3741

CITY OR TOWN

Frankfort

STATE

Kentucky

# 12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

SIGNATURE

*Cedric W. Melton*

TITLE

*State Historic Preservation Officer*

DATE

*7/14/77*

FOR NPS USE ONLY

I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROPERTY IS INCLUDED IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

*[Signature]*

DATE

*1.5.78*

ATTEST:

*[Signature]*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

*1.4.78*

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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Wolf Pen Branch Mill  
CONTINUATION SHEET

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Falls of the Ohio Metropolitan Council of Governments  
1972

Local

Falls of the Ohio Metropolitan Council of Governments  
Jefferson County Courthouse  
Louisville, Kentucky

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Wolf Pen Branch Mill

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Louisville Magazine. March 20, 1966.

Thomas, Samuel, W., ed. Views of Louisville Since 1776. Louisville: The Courier-Journal, 1971, p. 58.

Williams, Caroline. Louisville Scenes. New York: Doubleday and Company, Inc., 1970, pp. 60-61.



PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Wolf Pen Branch Mill JAN 5 1978  
Harrods Creek  
Jefferson Co. JUL 19 1977  
Kentucky Map 2.

Atlas of Jefferson and Oldham  
Counties, Kentucky. Philadelphia:  
Beers and Lanagan, 1879.  
The location of the Wolf Pen Branch  
Mill is outlined in red.

PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER