

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

JAN 26 1993

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

NATIONAL
REGISTER

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form (National Register Bulletin 16A). Complete each item by marking "x" in the appropriate box or by entering the information requested. If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions. Place additional entries and narrative items on continuation sheets (NPS Form 10-900a). Use a typewriter, word processor, or computer, to complete all items.

1. Name of Property

historic name Kregel Wind Mill Company
other names/site number NeHBS OT06:A-016

2. Location

street & number 1416 Central Avenue not for publication [na]
city or town Nebraska City vicinity [na]
state Nebraska code NE county Otoe code 131 zip code 68140

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, 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. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Laverne Sumner Date 1/15/93
Signature of certifying official
Director, Nebraska State Historical Society
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of certifying official/Title _____ Date _____
State or Federal agency and bureau _____

4. 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): _____

entered in the
National Register

Alanus Byrum Date 2/25/93
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

Kregel Wind Mill Company
Name of Property

Otoe County, Nebraska
County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property
(Check as many boxes as apply)

- private
- public-local
- public-State
- public-Federal

Category of Property
(Check only one box)

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

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count.)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
2		buildings
		sites
		structures
		objects
2		Total

Name of related multiple property listing
(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing.)

na

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register

0

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Industry/Manufacturing Facility

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions)

Work in Progress

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions)

Late Victorian/Romanesque
Other/Round Arch Style

Materials
(Enter categories from instructions)

foundation Not Visible
walls Metal
roof Not Visible
other Metal

Narrative Description

(Describe the historic and current condition of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria

(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- A** Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B** Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C** Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D** Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

Property is:

- A** owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B** removed from its original location.
- C** a birthplace or a grave.
- D** a cemetery.
- E** a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F** a commemorative property.
- G** less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Narrative Statement of Significance

(Explain the significance of the property on one or more continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography

(Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form on one or more continuation sheets.)

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 # _____

Areas of Significance

(Enter categories from instructions)

Industry

Agricultural

Period of Significance

c1905

Significant Dates

c1905

Significant Person

(Complete if Criterion B is marked above)

na

Cultural Affiliation

na

Architect/Builder

Unknown

Primary Location of Additional Data:

- State Historic Preservation Office
- Other State agency
- Federal agency
- Local government
- University
- Other

Name of repository:

Nebraska State Historical Society

Kregel Wind Mill Company
Name of Property

Otoe County, Nebraska
County and State

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property Less than one

UTM References (Place additional UTM references on a continuation sheet)

	Zone	Eastings	Northing		Zone	Eastings	Northing
1.	15	258000	4506640	3.			
2.				4.			

[] See continuation sheet.

Verbal Boundary Description
(Describe the boundaries of the property on a continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification
(Explain why the boundaries were selected on a continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Greg Miller, Historian; David Murphy, Architect

organization Nebraska State Historical Society date 1992

street & number P.O. Box 82554; 1500 R Street telephone (402) 471-4774

city or town Lincoln state NE zip code 68501

Additional Documentation

Submit the following items with the completed form:

Continuation Sheets

Maps

- A USGS map (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- A Sketch map for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources.

Photographs

Representative **black and white photographs** of the property.

Additional items
(Check with the SHPO or FPO for any additional items)

Property Owner

(Complete this item at the request of the SHPO or FPO.)

name _____

street & number _____ telephone _____

city or town _____ state _____ zip code _____

Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C. 470 et seq.).

Estimated Burden Statement: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 18.1 hours per response including the time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Chief, Administrative Services Division, National Park Service, P.O. Box 37127, Washington, DC 20013-7127; and the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reductions Project (1024-0018), Washington, DC 20503.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

**National Register of Historic Places
Continuation Sheet**

Kregel Wind Mill Company

Name of Property

Otoe County, Nebraska

County and State

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Description

The Kregel Wind Mill Company building in Nebraska City is a single-story rectangular loft-type building constructed of light frame materials with a flat roof. A shed-roofed wing on the north rear extends nearly the full width of the building. The south front facade displays four bays of large round-arched windows and/or garage doors set within rectangular panels. The building is clad in brick-impressed sheet metal, capped with a simple metal cornice. At the rear of the lot is a one-story urban outhouse. This nomination includes two contributing buildings.

Located at the western commercial end of Nebraska City's historic main street, the Kregel Wind Mill Company building is a one-story flat-roofed structure measuring 14.5 by 24.5 meters. Constructed, c1905, of light wood-frame, the large open space is divided into two longitudinal bays by a central north-south row of columns. The columns support a central beam upon which light wood roof joists are supported; the joists also rest upon the east and west outside walls. Two diminutive monitors are located in the center of each bay toward the rear of the north-south center of the building. The monitors mark significant interior work places and provide additional vertical space for equipment power drives which are all extant.

The interior space is unfinished except for the 4 by 5 meter office located in the southeast corner of the building. The office displays large borrow-lights to the interior factory space on both its west and north walls. It is completely finished with original furnishings dating from the early years of occupancy; storage cabinets still house the company's records. The loft or factory space also houses all of the tools, equipment, furnishings and materials from the earliest period of occupancy, as well as those accumulated over a half-century of manufacturing and supply.

A one-story wood frame storage shed and garage, of unknown vintage, is attached to the rear of the building; its length is nearly the width of the main building. A detached urban outhouse is located just off the alley.

The front wall of the building is clad in brick-impressed sheet metal, capped with a simple sheet metal cornice. Principle focus of the facade is on the large openings arranged in four bays--two windows and two wagon doors--which display large round-arched lights set within decorative rectangular panels. A single, original pedestrian door disrupts the formal rhythm of the arched lights, which provides entrance into the corner of the interior office space.

Statement of Significance

The Kregel Wind Mill Company is significant at the state level, and potentially eligible at the national level, under Criterion A for its association with manufacturing and agriculture. Beginning in at least 1890, the Kregel Wind Mill Company (then called the Nebraska City Manufacturing Company) began selling windmills in the Nebraska City area. Although their main product, the Eli windmill, was not widely marketed, the building is of special significance. The factory today remains completely intact with equipment and parts appearing as they probably did when the firm was in operation. This leaves the Kregel Wind Mill Building as a unique example of what was once an important part of the nation's history. The period of significance is c1905 when the firm began operating at its present location.

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Kregel Wind Mill Company

Name of Property

Otoe County, Nebraska

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Statement of Significance (continued)

From the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries, hundreds of windmill factories operated in the United States, each of them producing their own varieties of standardized water-pumping windmills. A small number of the plants, such as the Aermotor Company in Chicago and the Baker Manufacturing Company in Evansville, Wisconsin, were large facilities. The majority of the windmill factories, however, were facilities like that of the Kregel Wind Mill Company of Nebraska City, Nebraska, housed in a single-story building and using castings prepared by foundries in the vicinity.

The early history of the Kregel Wind Mill Company is less than clear. It certainly had its beginnings as the Nebraska City Manufacturing Company, but it is not clear when George Kregel began working for the firm or whether windmills were one of the items it produced. The 1882-1883 Nebraska State Gazetteer and Business Directory lists the Nebraska City Manufacturing Company and identifies J. S. Miller as the secretary. Advertisements in the Nebraska City News indicate the company made and sold farm equipment, but does not mention windmills.

Lack of information on the windmills and George Kregel persist for a few years. The trail picks up again in the 1886-1887 Nebraska State Gazetteer and Business Directory where George Kregel is identified as the secretary and manager of the Nebraska City Manufacturing Company. Mr. H. F. Cady is listed as president and the firm is identified as selling plows and cultivators. Additionally, advertisements in the Nebraska City News make no mention of the company dealing in windmills.

The next change occurs in the 1890-1891 Nebraska State Gazetteer and Business Directory. George Kregel is identified as the manager of the Nebraska City Manufacturing Company located at 1405 Central Avenue. No other names are listed in connection with the firm. Also in 1890, the newspaper contains advertisements indicating the company was selling windmills.

In 1893, the Nebraska City Manufacturing Company ceased to exist, but George Kregel continued to produce windmills and pumps at the same address. The gazetteer does not list a name for the operation, but advertisements in the 1893 newspapers call it "A Plow Factory." For the next several years there were no apparent noteworthy changes, and when change does occur next, the date must be (closely) approximated. An advertisement in a 1905 newspaper states that Kregel's company is on the corner of 15th and Central Avenue. This change is further clarified and substantiated by a 1906 Sanborn map that lists the firm's address as 1416 Central Avenue. The 1907 gazetteer (copies of the gazetteer are not available between 1903 and 1907) confirms this address.

Additional changes occur in the 1913 and 1915 gazetteer. In the 1913 issue the firm's name is officially listed as the Kregel Wind Mill Company. The later issue has basically the same entry except that it describes the company's product as "Eli Windmills."

In Nebraska, thirty-seven historic windmill companies (including Kregel) have been identified (Baker, 1985). Although there were some large operations such as the Dempster Wind Mill Company of Beatrice, most were smaller firms. Additionally, many of the companies lasted less than ten years. Unfortunately, an adequate buildings survey has not been done to determine what resources still exist. The Kregel Wind Mill Company, like most in the state, was a relatively small operation and it did not use salesmen or agents. As a result, the Eli Windmill was not widely used outside of the southeast Nebraska area even though the

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Kregel Wind Mill Company

Name of Property

Otoe County, Nebraska

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Statement of Significance (continued)

company was in operation for more than fifty years. The primary significance of the company, therefore, is not because of its size or the widespread popularity of the product.

Rather, the building is significant on a statewide level as a representative of the small windmill manufacturing concern which played such a prominent role in the agricultural development of Nebraska and the Great Plains. If it had not been for the water brought from the ground by the windmill, agriculture in much of the Great Plains would have been impossible. The windmill has been described as making "the difference in time of drought between the family who was able to hold on and the one that had to give up."¹

The integrity of artifacts associated with the building greatly enhances this statewide significance. In the opinion of windmill historian T. Lindsay Baker, the integrity of associated artifacts renders the building as it exists today potentially significant at the national level, because it is the only small-scale factory in the nation that remains intact; with equipment and parts appearing as they probably did when the factory was operating. Baker further states that although other similar operations exist, none remain intact with their historic contents and all have been converted to twentieth-century manufacturing or alternative uses.² This leaves the Kregel Wind Mill building as a unique example of what was once an important part of the nation's manufacturing and agricultural history.

Bibliography

Baker, T. Lindsay. A Field Guide to American Windmills. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1985.

_____. Letter to Nebraska State Historical Society, October 6, 1992.

_____. 1991. Society for Industrial Archeology. 20:3.

_____. 1986. Windmillers' Gazette. 3:2-5.

Nebraska City News.

Nebraska State Gazetteer and Business Directory. Omaha: Polk-McAvoy Directory Co.

Webb, Walter Prescott. "The Story of Some Prairie Inventions." Nebraska History. Vol. 34, no. 4, December 1953, p. 229-243.

Verbal Boundary Description

Described as lot 8, block 15, Original Town of Nebraska City, Otoe County, Nebraska.

¹ Webb, Walter Prescott. "The Story of Some Prairie Inventions." Nebraska History. Vol. 34, no. 4, December 1953, p229-243.

². Letter from T. Lindsay Baker to Nebraska State Historical Society, October 6, 1992.

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Continuation Sheet**

Kregel Wind Mill Company

Name of Property

Otoe County, Nebraska

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Boundary Justification

Boundary includes all historically associated real estate.