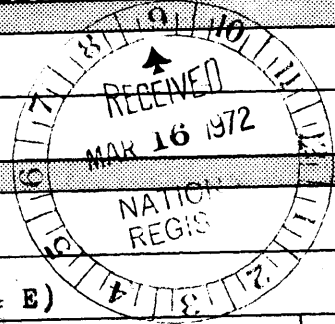


2/6/73

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE:	Oklahoma
COUNTY:	Delaware
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
OCT 18 1972	



1. NAME

COMMON: Hildebrand Mill

AND/OR HISTORIC: Beck Mill

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: c. 10 m. W of

CITY OR TOWN: West Siloam Springs (SW/4 Sec. 24, T 20 N, R 24 E)

STATE	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Oklahoma	40	Delaware	041

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Object <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Structure	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private <input type="checkbox"/> Both	<input type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No

PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural	<input type="checkbox"/> Government	<input type="checkbox"/> Park	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	<input type="checkbox"/> Comments
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/> Private Residence	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)	
<input type="checkbox"/> Educational	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Religious	<u>Unused at time</u>	
<input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<u>of writing</u>	

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Kermit Beck

STREET AND NUMBER: Rural Route #4

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
<u>Siloam Springs</u>	<u>Arkansas</u>	<u>05</u>

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.: Office of the County Clerk

STREET AND NUMBER: Delaware County Courthouse

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE	CODE
<u>Jay</u>	<u>Oklahoma</u>	<u>40</u>

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Oklahoma Historic Sites Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1958 Federal State County Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: Oklahoma Historical Society

STREET AND NUMBER: Historical Society Building

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
<u>Oklahoma City</u>	<u>Oklahoma</u>	<u>40</u>

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:	Oklahoma
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DATE	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	<input type="checkbox"/> Excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> Good	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Fair	<input type="checkbox"/> Deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> Ruins	<input type="checkbox"/> Unexposed
	(Check One)			(Check One)		
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Altered	<input type="checkbox"/> Unaltered		<input type="checkbox"/> Moved	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Original Site	

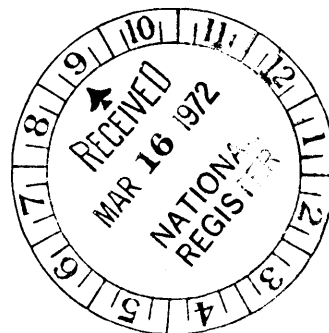
DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The original Hildebrand (Beck) Mill was built about 1845 just west of the present mill building and nearer Flint Creek. Its buhrs were brought over from France. They were powered by an overshot wooden wheel twenty feet in diameter, fed by Flint Creek water carried in a 300-foot-long dug flume, four feet square. This mill race was enlarged sometime before the Civil War to create a channel eight feet wide and eight feet deep, part of it cut through solid limestone.

A devastating flood in 1892 destroyed this first mill, along with much of its original machinery. The present, much more impressive mill building, was erected in 1907. It contained at least one of the original French buhrs, that for grinding corn. But the wooden wheel was replaced by a more efficient water turbine manufactured in Georgia. This turbine also powered a corn sheller and a mill for grinding cattle feed, both of which remain in the building today. Water power was retired for good in 1935, when a gasoline engine was installed. Hildebrand last operated as a mill - to cut lumber - in the summer of 1967. But for the water turbine, however, its machinery is still complete.

The building itself, facing east, is 30 feet wide, 40 feet long, and 40 feet high. (The owner, when rebuilding in 1907, had proposed to install flour milling machinery, hence the unusual four-story height.) Its east foundation is the flat limestone of Flint Creek's east bank. The mill's west end is supported by native limestone pillars, about ten feet high, rising from the creek bottom. The now-dry mill race, coming in from a mill pond off to the northeast, strikes the building about the middle of its north side. Unpainted for many, many years, Hildebrand Mill is deteriorating rapidly.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS





SIGNIFICANCE PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known) 1840s to the present

AREA OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Jurisprudence</u>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	_____
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	_____
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Water-powered mills, whether for grinding grain or cutting lumber, played a vital role on the frontier where lack of transportation facilities made goods and supplies from the outside hard to come by and a shortage of cash often made their purchase impossible even when they were available. The Hildebrand* (Beck) Mill on Flint Creek, in what is now the Delaware County section of the old Cherokee Nation, was one of the better known of these mills. It handled all grains as well as timber. It was in service to the community for a century and more. And throughout the Civil War, interestingly enough, it played a somewhat ambiguous role, serving the commissary needs, at one time or another, of forces of both the North and the South. Finally -- as a last fillip to its claim to the protection of National Register status -- Hildebrand Mill featured in one of the more celebrated acts of violence in Indian Territory (Civil War battles excluded) ... an armed clash between white and Indian judicial systems that ended with what may be the only informal "peace treaty" ever made between the United States and a single individual.

The original Hildebrand Mill was built in 1845 or shortly thereafter by Jeremiah C. Towers. It contained two sets of buhrs - one for

* Note should be taken here of the wide-spread variation to be found in the spelling of this important Cherokee family name. Patriarch of the family, according to Emmett Starr's History of the Cherokee Indians (1922), was John Hildebrand, a native of Germany. He had five children by his first wife, a German, and four by his second, Susannah Womancatcher, a Cherokee. Succeeding generations of large families produced a large number of Hildebrands, of varying degrees of Cherokee blood ... and a bewildering variety of spellings. Starr gives the genealogy of no less than 64 Hildebrands, with that spelling. Unfortunately, the 1835 Census of Cherokees taken before their removal to Indian Territory, gives the name as Helderbrand and the Final Rolls of the Cherokees, prepared in 1902, give it as Hilderbrand. Elsewhere in print are such additional spellings as Hilderbrandt, Helterbrand, and Hulderbrand. For what it's worth: the post office at the site -- from August 3, 1866, to June 25, 1889 -- was Hilderbrand. Throughout this nomination Hildebrand will be used, in deference to Starr as a recognized genealogist. The decision should not be taken as either final or official.

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Littlefield, Jr., Daniel F., and Underhill, Lonnie E., "Hildebrand's Mill Near Flint, Cherokee Nation," The Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XLVIII (1970), pp. 83-94
 --- "Notes and Documents," The Chronicles of Oklahoma, Vol. XXXII (1954), pp. 227-229

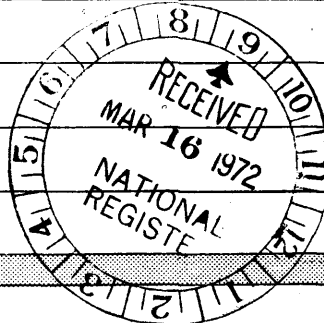
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY				O R	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES				
CORNER	LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		LATITUDE		LONGITUDE		
	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"	36°	11'	53"
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"	94°	40'	16"
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"			
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"			

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: **Five Acres**

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

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



NO 0701
HL

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: **Kent Ruth, Deputy**

ORGANIZATION: **Oklahoma Historical Society** DATE: **January 1972**

STREET AND NUMBER: **Historical Building**

CITY OR TOWN: **Oklahoma City** STATE: **Oklahoma** CODE: **40**

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National State Local

Name: *[Signature]*
 Title: *Chairman office for Oklahoma*
 Date: _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

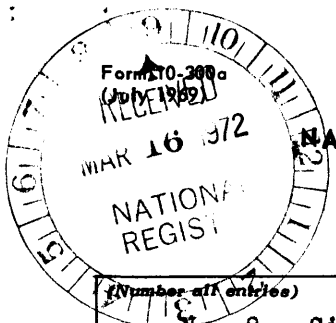
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register.

[Signature]
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date: *10/18/72*

ATTEST:
[Signature]
 Keeper of The National Register

Date: *10-16-72*



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
Oklahoma	
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Delaware	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
	OCT 18 1972

No. 8. Significance - 2

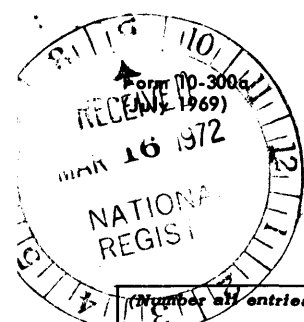
Hildebrand Mill

corn, the other for wheat. Made of marble, they were brought from France to New Orleans, up the Mississippi and Arkansas Rivers to Fort Gibson, then finally to the Flint Creek site by oxcart. The corn buhr remains in the mill. The other was lost, probably in the same 1892 flood that destroyed the first mill and much of the other original machinery, including the overshot wooden wheel, twenty feet in diameter and fed by a 300-foot-long flume.

Shortly after completing the mill Towers sold it to Stephen Hildebrand. (Here again confusion exists, as some written records refer to the new owner as Peter Hildebrand, an uncle of Stephen and a man of means in Tennessee before coming to Indian Territory where, according to Starr, he operated "a saw, turning and grist mill." He died Dec. 11, 1851. However, Stephen was the son of Michael, a brother of Peter. Michael was also a slave-owning man of substance in Tennessee, and the owner of two mills, so Stephen grew up with a strong milling background. His presumed ownership is based on his marriage to Pauline Beck.) Hildebrand made many improvements in the mill. The original mill race was four feet square. He hired two Irishmen to double these dimensions to make it eight feet wide, eight feet deep. They were paid two thousand dollars in gold for the job - a not inconsiderable job that took them two years, as the flume was over 300 feet long and much of it had to be cut through beds of solid limestone.

Sometime before the Civil War Stephen Hildebrand married Pauline ("Aunt Polly") Beck. This not only brought the Beck family name into the history of Hildebrand Mill, but also laid the foundation for controversy and bloody strife that soon surrounded it. When the war broke out, the Becks cast their lot with the South. Meanwhile another old Cherokee family, the Proctors (said to be related to the Becks by marriage) followed the dictates of their strong Union sympathies. Quite possibly the strong animosity that grew up between the two families had its roots in the war years. The mill was used extensively during the Civil War. There are many references to it in the Official Records and both sides, at one time or another, used the facility as part of their commissary activities. Quite possibly, too, there were additional reasons, now obscured by the passage of time, for the ill feeling between the two families. At any rate, when "Aunt Polly" Beck, following Hildebrand's death, married Frank Kesterson, a white man, the stage for the "Battle of Going Snake" was set.

It was the loss of some Kesterson cattle that triggered the conflict. One Ezekiel ("Zeke") Proctor had often been in trouble with the law and the Kesterons charged him with the theft. Zeke, in return, sent word he



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

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Delaware	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
061 18 1972	

(Number of entries)

No. 8. Significance - 3

Hildebrand Mill

would kill Kesterson and on Febr. 14, 1872, he went to the mill to make good his threat. Finding both Kesterson and his wife outside the mill, he walked to within a few feet of them and opened fire. Mrs. Beck, trying to rush between them, received a bullet from Proctor guns in her abdomen. She died a few hours later and Proctor went "on the scout."

The next two years demonstrated the problem of law enforcement in Indian Territory after the Civil War, which had caused a certain deterioration in quality of the Indians' own judicial system. At this time the Cherokee Nation treaty with the United States provided that no Cherokee could be tried in U. S. courts unless the litigation involved both races. Additionally, cases involving only whites were to be tried in U. S. courts, while those involving only Cherokees were to be heard in the Cherokee courts. Mrs. Beck, of course, was Cherokee, as was Proctor. But the Cherokee courts at the time were inclined to be weak, or worse. Proctor was finally induced to surrender, but his trial was delayed so often the Becks lost patience. They went instead to the white man's court in Fort Smith, Ark., persuading U. S. Commissioner J. O. Churchill to issue a writ for Proctor's arrest for murder. This was on April 11, 1874.

A posse was promptly dispatched to carry out the writ. But word had sped ahead in the meantime to alert Proctor, by then on trial in a Cherokee court sitting in a log school house in Going Snake district. Such were the unsettled conditions in Indian Territory at this time that Proctor and his friends were all armed, albeit in the court room. When the posse arrived, on April 15, gunfire broke out on both sides. By the time the battle had ended, eleven (possible 12) men were dead, including two federal marshals. Proctor himself was only wounded.

The U. S. courts belatedly decided to live up the Cherokee treaty restrictions and refused to prosecute Proctor. But the U. S. marshal's office did have him captured. After threatening him with prosecution, a "peace treaty" was agreed to and Proctor went free under agreement to become a law abiding citizen. From all accounts he did.

Hildebrand Mill was extremely busy in the 1870s cutting up nearby timber. Planing mill and shingle mill operations were added. Then when indiscriminate timber cutting was finally halted, Hildebrand became more important as a grist mill. It was capable of handling from 12 to 20 bushels of grain per hour. Yet despite this capacity there was often a backlog of grain to be ground. The mill's location on or near several main roads through this section of the Cherokee Nation made it a focal point of activity. The so-called "Hildebrand Road" even supported a toll gate at one time near the present town of Kansas, just to the southwest.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE	
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COUNTY	
Delaware	
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ENTRY NUMBER	DATE
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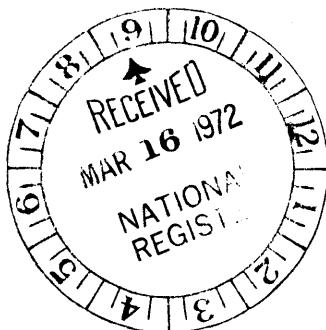
(Number all entries)

No. 8. Significance - 4

Hildebrand Mill

Following the disastrous flood of 1892, Aaron Headin Beck (who had bought the mill from his Aunt Polly some years before she was killed) was not able to rebuild immediately. But by 1907 he had the present 40-foot-high structure complete. He had hoped to install flour milling machinery, hence its height. Instead he reinstalled the original corn buhr. In place of the overshot wooden wheel, however, he put in a more efficient water turbine that also drove a corn sheller and a mill for grinding feed for cattle. The grist mill was last run by water in 1935. A gasoline engine was last used in 1967 to run the sawmill. But most of the old mill's impressive machinery is still in place and, despite the appearance of the building's exterior, in quite good condition.

Hildebrand Mill may have ended for good its century-and-a-quarter of service to the hill people of the old Cherokee Nation. But it sits placidly beside Flint Creek meanwhile, seemingly ready and willing to start up its old machinery once more, if given the opportunity.



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY - NOMINATION FORM

(Continuation Sheet)

STATE Oklahoma	
COUNTY Delaware	
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(Number all entries)

No. 8. Addendum

As noted, there are many references to Hildebrand Mill in the Official Records of the Civil War. Both sides used the mill at various times. In this connection are just two entries presented by Col. George H. Shirk in his newspaper feature, "Civil War in Indian Territory - One Hundred Years Ago in Indian Territory," which ran in The Daily Oklahoman (Oklahoma City, Oklahoma) from June 1, 1961, to June 30, 1965.

September 23 [1862]: A Confederate scouting party under Capt. James McDonel, today reached Hilderbrand's (sic) Mill on the Illinois River and found the proprietor operating his establishment. Capt. McDonel reported that the mill had three hundred bushels of wheat, one hundred bushels of corn, and six pounds of flour in store, which he at once requisitioned for the use of the Confederate forces.

February 5, [1863]: Col. W. A. Phillips, commanding the [Union] Indian Brigade, is completing arrangements for the deployment of his troops necessitated by the meeting of the Cherokee National Council. A detachment of about 200 has been left at Maysville near Camp Curtis to operate a small mill and another detachment has been place at Hildebrand's (sic) Mill in the Cherokee Nation in order to keep it operating and to distribute flour to the needy.

