Form 10-300
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY – NOMINATION FORM

(Type all entries – complete applicable sections)

STATE: Kentucky	
COUNTY: Jefferson	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER	DATE

1. NAME

COMMON: Louisville Water Company Pumping Station

AND/OR HISTORIC: Louisville Water Company Pumping Station

2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER: Zorn Avenue

CITY OR TOWN: Louisville

STATE	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
Kentucky		Jefferson	

3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP		STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
☐ District ☒ Building	☐ Public	Public Acquisition:	☐ Occupied	Yes:
☐ Site ☒ Structure	XX Private	☐ In Process	☒ Unoccupied	☒ Restricted
☐ Object	☐ Both	☐ Being Considered	☐ Preservation work in progress	☐ Unrestricted
				☐ No

PRESENT USE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Agricultural	☐ Government	☐ Park	☐ Transportation	☐ Comments
XX Commercial	☐ Industrial	☐ Private Residence	☐ Other *(Specify)*	
☐ Educational	☐ Military	☐ Religious		
☐ Entertainment	☐ Museum	☐ Scientific		

4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME: Louisville Water Company

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
Louisville	Kentucky	

5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC: Jefferson County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE	CODE
Louisville	Kentucky	

6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY: Historic American Engineering Record

DATE OF SURVEY: 1971 ☒ Federal ☐ State ☐ County ☐ Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS: unedited material in HAER files, National Park Service

STREET AND NUMBER: 801 19th Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN:	STATE:	CODE
Washington	D.C.	

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

STATE:

COUNTY:

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ENTRY NUMBER
DATE

7. DESCRIPTION

CONDITION	(Check One)					
	☐ Excellent	☒ Good	☐ Fair	☐ Deteriorated	☐ Ruins	☐ Unexposed
	(Check One)		(Check One)			
	☐ Altered	☒ Unaltered	☐ Moved	☒ Original Site		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL *(if known)* PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The 1860 pumping station is composed of two structures, the engine and boiler room, and the standpipe tower. Both buildings are aggressively Classical Revival in style and executed in the Roman Corinthian order. The engine and boiler room is a two-story brick temple form building three bays wide and with an handsome tetrastyle entrance portico. Flanking the central section are long one-story wings also three bays wide. The middle bay is pulled forward of the flanking bays and has a pedimented cross gable. This gives the effect of small flanking pavilions. The corners of the building are marked by engaged brick pilasters.

The robust Corinthian capitals and the rich entablature detail are made of terra-cotta. The window and door pediments and supporting consoles and architraves are cast iron, as are the column bases. The building is 158 feet long and 55 feet deep.

On the interior the space is divided into large spaces for the machinery which is no longer there and several smaller spaces once used as offices. There is an interior balcony in the central section reached by a cast iron spiral staircase. The walls are tiled to shoulder height and the rooms have plaster cornices.

Immediately in front of the entrance portico is located the remarkable 169 foot high standpipe tower. This standpipe tower is designed in imitation of a triumphal Roman column in the Doric order. On top of the capital is a domed cupola. The base of the column is surrounded by a balustraded peristyle of ten Corinthian columns set on a three-stepped stylobate. The balustrade has ten pedestals corresponding to the column spacing. On top of each pedestal is a life size classical statue of a mythological figure such as Ceres, Flora, Diana, etc. One of the ten statues, however, represents a half naked Indian warrior and his dog. The base of the standpipe up to a height approximately that of the heads of the statues is built of brick laid in common bond. Facing the engine room building is an entrance door with a semicircular glazed transom. Flanking the doorway and at 90 degrees to it are two round headed windows with double hung sash. On the fourth side of the standpipe base is a stone plaque with the names of the builders of the waterworks and the dates of construction.

The shaft of the standpipe is constructed of riveted plates of steel and sheet metal.

The two buildings that make up the old pumping station can be seen from great distances up and down the Ohio River and they are set in an open park-like area.

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8. SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

☐ Pre-Columbian	☐ 16th Century	☐ 18th Century	☐ 20th Century
☐ 15th Century	☐ 17th Century	☒ 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) *(If Applicable and Known)* 1856-1860

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE *(Check One or More as Appropriate)*

Aboriginal	☐ Education	☐ Political	☐ Urban Planning
☐ Prehistoric	☒ Engineering	☐ Religion/Philosophy	☐ Other *(Specify)*
☐ Historic	☐ Industry		
☐ Agriculture	☐ Invention	☐ Science	
☒ Architecture	☐ Landscape Architecture	☐ Sculpture	
☐ Art	☐ Literature	☐ Social/Humanitarian	
☐ Commerce	☐ Military	☐ Theater	
☐ Communications	☐ Music	☐ Transportation	
☐ Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In the years from 1773-1775 the French architect Claude-Nicholas Ledoux built the Royal Salt Works at Arc-et-Senans in eastern France. At the Salt Works this bold, visionary architect sought to forge a union of architectural beauty with industrial efficiency that would create a utopian and symbolic monument to the dignity of work and industry. Heretofore stylistic architectural excellence had not in particular been "focused" on factories. Utilitarian considerations far outweighted the symbolic possibilities at hand.

In 19th century America, the growing and expanding country was proud of work and proud of industry and public works. The spirit which Ledoux's work represented was fully appreciated. It found one of its finest expressions in the Louisville Water Company Pumping Station in Louisville, Kentucky.

The Louisville Water Company Pumping Station, located at the end of Zorn Avenue, was built from 1858 to 1860. It was designed and constructed by the chief engineer of the Water Company, Theodore R. Scowden. In 1893 the adjacent pumping station was completed to more than double capacity of the water works. The two buildings of the 1860 works are no longer operative however, they are kept in an excellent state of preservation.

The pumping station is composed of the engine room and the standpipe tower. Both are built in the Classical Revival style and both are exuberant outpourings of civic pride. The engine room is in the form of a temple in the Corinthian order and the 169 foot high standpipe tower is built in imitation of a triumphal Roman column. The ornamental details of the architecture are made of terra cotta and cast iron, in themselves the products of industry.

The Louisville Water Company Pumping Station is the finest example in the country of the symbolic and monumental function of industrial architecture.

History

The Louisville Water Company was incorporated by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky on March 6, 1854. The waterworks, on the banks of the Ohio River, were to be completed by 1857 but various administrative and fiscal delays prevented their construction until the following year. A

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Hamlin, Talbot, Greek Revival Architecture in America, (New York, 1944).
Newcomb, Rexford, Architecture in Old Kentucky, (Urbanna, 1953).
American Guide Series, Louisville, A Guide to the Falls City (New York, 1940).
Johnson, J. Stoddard, ed., Memorial History of Louisville, (Chicago, 1897).

10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY						OR	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	Degrees	Minutes	Seconds
NW	°	'	"	°	'	"		38 °	16 '	50"	85 °	42'	05 "
NE	°	'	"	°	'	"							
SE	°	'	"	°	'	"							
SW	°	'	"	°	'	"							

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: less than 10 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
TATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE:
W. Brown Morton III, Architect

ORGANIZATION: N.P.S., O.A.H.P., National Historic Surveys
DATE: 8/30/71

STREET AND NUMBER:
801 19th Street, N.W.

CITY OR TOWN: Washington
STATE: D.C.
CODE:

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 _____

Title _____

Date _____

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

_____
Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

Date _____

ATTEST:

_____
Keeper of The National Register

Date _____

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stone tablet on the side of the standpipe, beneath the peristyle, gives the following information:

Louisville Waterworks

Cornerstone of the Engine house

Laid September 6, 1858
Water supplied to the city October 16, 1860

A. Harris, President
D. S. Benedict
J. S. Lithgow
A. C. Shotwell — Directors
B. J. Adams
William Inman

T. R. Schwden, Chief Engineer
Charles Hermany — Asst. Engineers
R. T. Scowden

Contractors	
Stonework and Reservoir	W. P. Halin
Brickwork	E. Crutchfield
Carpenters work	White and Cole
Fancy Iron Work	George Meadows
Engines	Roach and Long
Terra Cotta Work	P. Bannon

A persistent tradition, repeated by Talbot Hamilin in Greek Revival Architecture in America, gives credit to Gideon Shryock for being the architect of the pumping station. However, all contemporary accounts site Theodore R. Scowden as both architect and engineer. None mention Shryock.

When completed and fully equipped with two beam Cornish engines, two pair of duplex steam pumps, and two batteries of boilers containing three Cornish boilers each, the pumping station was capable of supplying sixteen million gallons of water per day. In 1885 the demand for water had stretched to the station's capacity and a new pumping station was commenced immediately adjacent to it with a capacity of eighteen million gallons of water per 24 hours. This new facility was completed in 1893. While the 1860 pumping station has not been active for some time and no longer contains its pumping machinery, the pumphouse and standpipe have been kept in excellent repair. The 169 foot high standpipe tower was blown over in the tornado of March 27, 1890. However, it was immediately re-erected by the Chief Engineer, Charles Hermany, who had been Scowden's assistant at the time of its construction thirty years earlier.