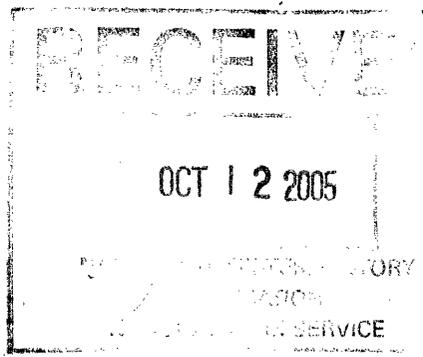


1317

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service



NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Pearce—Wheeler Farm
other names/site number HT-249; Harlow Farm

2. Location

street & number 640 Sims Cemetery Road not for publication N/A city or town Canmer vicinity X
state Kentucky code KY county Hart code 099 zip code 42722

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, I hereby certify that this X 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 X meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide X locally.

David L. Morgan 10-6-05
Signature of certifying official David L. Morgan, SHPO Date

Kentucky Heritage Council/State Historic Preservation Office
State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification
I, hereby certify that this property is:

entered in the National Register Edson R. Beall 11-25-05
 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): _____

[Signature] _____
Signature of Keeper Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

private
 public-local
 public-State
 public-Federal

Category of Property

building(s)
 district
 site
 structure
 object

Number of Resources within Property

Contributing	Noncontributing	
<u> 4 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	buildings
<u> 1 </u>	<u> </u>	sites
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	structures
<u> </u>	<u> </u>	objects
<u> 5 </u>	<u> 0 </u>	Total

Number of resources previously listed in the National Register 0 Name of related multiple property listing N/A **6. Function or Use**

Historic Functions

Cat: <u>DOMESTIC</u>	Sub: <u>Single Dwelling</u>
<u>AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE</u>	Sub: <u>Smokehouse</u>
<u>AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE</u>	Sub: <u>Animal Facility</u>
<u>AGRICULTURE/SUBSISTENCE</u>	Sub: <u>Agricultural Outbuilding</u>

Current Functions

Cat: <u>LANDSCAPE</u>	Sub: <u>Conservation Area</u>
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7. Description

Architectural Classification:

Cat: <u>OTHER</u>	Sub: <u>Central Passage, Single Pile Log House</u>
	Sub: <u>Single crib Log Outbuilding</u>
	Sub: <u>Single Crib Log Barn</u>

Materials

Foundation	<u>STONE</u>
roof	<u>Metal, Wood</u>
walls	<u>Wood</u>
other	<u>NA</u>

Narrative Description (See continuation sheets.)

8. Statement of Significance

- 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

- A owned by a religious institution, 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.

Areas of Significance AGRICULTURE
 Period of Significance 1850-1930
 Significant Dates 1853, 1859, 1903
 Significant Person N/A
 Cultural Affiliation N/A
 Architect/Builder Unknown.

Narrative Statement of Significance (See continuation sheets.)

9. Major Bibliographical References (See continuation sheets.)

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- preliminary determinat. of individual listing 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 # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

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

Name of repository: University Archives, Western Kentucky University

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 49.741 acres

UTM References

	Zone	Easting	Northing	Hudgins Quad
A:	16	613 770	4130 540	
B:	16	613 820	4129 730	
C:	16	613 605	4129 780	
D:	16	613 530	4130 480	

Verbal Boundary Description (See continuation sheet.)

Boundary Justification (See continuation sheet.)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Joyce Trammell, Margaret Dawson, Ross Fuqua

organization NA

address (Trammell) PO Box 3, Broooks, KY 40109

address (Dawson) 3620 Taylor Blvd., Louisville, KY 40215

date August 1, 2005

telephone 502-955-6841

Property Owner

name Bruce Cohen

street & number 619 Floral Terrace

city or town Louisville

telephone 502-298-0652

state KY zip code 40208

DESCRIPTION

The Pearce--Wheeler Farm (HT 249) is an agricultural complex of 49.741 acres in eastern Hart County, Kentucky. The property being considered for nomination contains one intact house, three agricultural outbuildings and one small building, now in ruins, said to have once been a slave house. The former slave house originally was located just behind the main house, then moved closer to the barns and converted to use as a harness shop during the Wheeler ownership.

The property is located at the end of Sims Cemetery Road in eastern Hart County, approximately seven miles northeast of Canmer, Kentucky. The farm is situated in Davis Bend on the south side of the Green River, which served as a transportation corridor for products grown on the land. The Pearce-Wheeler Farm's upper agricultural fields where the buildings stand, gently roll westward and northward down to the bottom lands adjacent to Green River. Used in recent years for soy and buffalo grass production, the fields now stand dormant as per the terms of the property's conservation easement.

In the 1840s, the European-American owner of the property, Edmund Pearce, who was responsible for building four of the five structures on the farm, originally held 1,000 acres on the south side of Green River. He had inherited the property through his mother, Ann Clark Pearce. The said property represented a 1/6 inheritance that Ann Clark Pearce inherited from her father, Jonathan Clark. Clark had received this, along with other properties, as a land grant for his service in the Revolutionary War. While the fields are not currently in use, they are an integral reminder of the productive and profitable farming that once occurred here.

The agricultural tax records show the original size of the property was 1,000 acres in 1848. Then in 1849, the size was reduced to 775. By 1853, when Edmund Pearce began farming the property on Davis Bend, its size was listed as 391 acres. For twelve years, its size was approximated in the tax records as 400 acres, till it was purchased by Claiborne Harlow in 1868, and again listed at 391 acres. William Richard Wheeler and his wife, who was a daughter of Harlow, received 215 acres at Claiborne Harlow's death in 1885. The property eventually passed into the hands of Ruth Wheeler Weed and from her to various other owners until the Nature Conservancy bought 70 acres in the year 2000. In 2004, 49.71 acres were sold to the present owner, Bruce Cohen, of Louisville, Kentucky, under the restrictions of a conservation easement (Hart County Deed Book 270:129). Remarkably, all structures which contribute historic meaning to this farm still exist together under a single property owner, Mr. Cohen.

Four structures remain fairly intact on the property. The fifth, which, according to oral tradition was called a slave house, was moved from its original place behind the main house and closer to the barns to serve as a harness shop. That structure (5) is now in ruins.

LIST OF FEATURES

1. Main house (circa 1847); contributing building
2. Smokehouse (circa 1847); contributing structure
3. Livestock barn (circa 1847); contributing structure
4. Large Mule barn (circa 1903); contributing structure
5. Log ruins (circa 1847); in ruins

DESCRIPTION OF INDIVIDUAL FEATURES

1. **Main Residence:** The Pearce--Wheeler house was built in two phases. The first phase, circa 1847, resulted in the construction of a two-story, central hall I-house, constructed of log in the dogtrot form. According to Macintire, in his site report of 2002, both pens were built at the same time. The house has three porches and a full stone basement. The 1-1/2-story rear ell was added early on, probably before 1850, again according to Macintire. It is possible that the house's exterior was covered with weather boarding at this same time.

The front of the house is situated to face Sims Cemetery Road to the south, while the other sides are in the bend of the Green River. During the first phase, the house was constructed of a traditional horizontal log method, from hardwoods taken from the property. The construction can be dated prior to 1847, when Pearce first occupied the house as a part-time resident, his main residence being located in Jefferson County, Kentucky. The house is in the same style as Mulberry Hill in Jefferson County, the home of Pearce's great-grandfather, John Clark, the father of George R., William and Jonathan Clark, Pearce's grandfather. Its foundation consists of mortared limestone blocks, creating a full basement once used for food storage. There also remain several massive, hand-cut limestone steps leading up to the three main entrances of the house. The exterior brick chimneys are said to have been made of fired clay taken from the property, or nearby (Wheeler 2004). On the ground floor is a door to the outside on the east gable and a window in its corresponding place on the upper floor. There is a front window on the upper level of the central passage on the landing between the east and west upstairs rooms.

The exposed interior walls display massive hewn logs. The two mantel pieces on the first floor, as well as the central staircase, have simple, hand made wood details. The floor plan of the original structure is described as a two-story, central passage I-house, with each interior room measuring approximately eighteen feet square. The ground floor rooms exhibit twelve foot ceilings, while the rooms upstairs are approximately seven feet in height. Each of the four main rooms have hearths, and the two ground floor rooms still have hand-detailed mantel pieces intact. Each main room has two windows, one opening to the north and one on the south face of the house, with the exception of the east rooms, where the rear ell joins the rest of the house on its north facade. The central passage contains a wide staircase to the upper level, and has interesting hand details in the woodwork.

The framed rear ell kitchen and dining area were added during the second phase of construction, circa 1850, according to Macintire. If the rear ell were placed on the house any later, it would have coincided with the first transfer of ownership, from Edmund Pearce to Claiborne Harlow, Jr., in the late 1860s. The ell is 1-1/2 stories in height, with the ground floor level serving as a kitchen and dining area for the Harlow family, and the second level providing an extra sleeping area. There is a narrow staircase in the east room, ground level, that was added at this same time to access the second floor. Also, added at this time was the wood weather board siding that still covers the exterior walls of the house (Weed 2000).

2. **Smokehouse:** The smokehouse is not far from the rear ell kitchen. It is of a single pen horizontal log construction, 1-1/2 stories in height, having one door on the gable end facing the house, with hand-wrought hinges and nails. The sills of the smokehouse rest on large stones, and the structure appears to be made of roughly the same size and type of timber as the house. Its roof is gabled, and it extends from the front of the structure over the door to create a significant eave. It may be inferred that the builders of the house utilized a V-notching method of log construction, as the original barn and smokehouse both display V-notching, and all three buildings were constructed at approximately the same time.
3. **Livestock Barn:** This barn is a hewn log, double crib form with a central aisle, having a metal roof. As Macintire illustrates, this was a type of barn once common in this area, although few are still found today (2002). It is composed of two log systems joined by an upper hay loft, and having a central passage in between. It was used to hold mules, horses and other livestock, and was most likely built during the same period as the house and smokehouse.
4. **Large mule barn:** A newer, larger frame barn was built circa 1903 to facilitate the owner's expanding mule trading business. It is also a very large, double crib form, having a central passage and large hay loft above. There is also a nicely designed bridge spanning the two bays of the hay loft, and stylized paintings of mules and names of previous owners painted on the stall doors. Oral tradition maintains that all the wood for this barn, called the "red barn," came from trees taken from the property which were floated across the Green River to a nearby mill, cut, and floated back to the property (Wheeler 2004). This barn was built mostly by hired labor over a period of several months, and contracted out by then owner William Richard Wheeler (Wheeler 2004). It is in good physical condition.
5. **Harness Shop/possible Slave house:** The fifth remaining structure on the property is in ruins. It was a small single pen, horizontal log structure. This building, called the slave house, was moved from its original site behind the house, closer to the barns and then used as a tack or harness shop for the mules and horses.

Integrity Considerations

The Pearce--Wheeler Farm (HT 249) has significance under Criterion A, as it embodies a typical nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century agricultural complex in Hart County, Kentucky. Despite over one-hundred-and-fifty years of sweeping changes to agricultural life in the United States, the Pearce--Wheeler house and its contributing outbuildings have remained more or less in their original forms: and more importantly, these structures, when experienced together, represent a prosperous agricultural lifeway in the Upper South.

Section 7 Page 4

The Pearce--Wheeler house has integrity of design and materials, as its foundation, chimneys and log structure remain intact. The original weather boarding from the 1860s still covers its exterior, although the metal roof has been replaced since the mid-twentieth century. The framed rear ell kitchen addition, also from the 1860s, represents a typical practice of adding a specialized space for food preparation and consumption to a log house of this kind (Williams 1991:65-67).

The smoke house remains very true to its overall form, although much of the chinking has deteriorated. Its hand-wrought nails and hinges provide evidence of an earlier period, before rural settlers had easy access to mass made hardware of the kind (Macintire 2002). The original double crib log barn is in great need of repair, as several logs have fallen or have been taken out, although it still maintains a certain level of integrity on the basis of form. With the exception of its metal roof, little of its physical shape and materials have changed since its creation.

The frame mule barn, circa 1903, is the most structurally sound of the outbuildings. Its construction displays the owner's desire and need for diversification among his agricultural products. The barn's frame is in good repair and its interior doors still carry painted designs and names from the time of its construction.

Although most of the structures on the Pearce--Wheeler Farm have sat unused for several years, some in disrepair, it is the significance of these structures *experienced together* and held within a *single piece of property*, which provides for a broader understanding of Hart County agricultural history.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 1

Name of Property: Pearce- Wheeler Farm
Location: Hart County, Kentucky

Statement of Significance

The Pearce-Wheeler Farm (HT 249) in Hart County, Kentucky, meets National Register Criterion A and is significant within the historic context "Hart County Agriculture, 1850 - 1930." The farm is an example of a cohesive agricultural complex, well above the norm for the Pennyryle and especially for Hart County. Its location, northeast of Camner, Kentucky, in the rolling, fertile land of Davis Bend, on the south side of Green River, allowed for the high production of its agricultural products. Ready movement of these products to market was accomplished by way of the Green River, which borders the farm on three sides. The completion of the L & N railroad in 1859, allowed for even more access to markets. The construction of the house, circa 1847, the expansion, circa 1850, and the addition of the mule barn, circa 1900, are the most significant resources that give the farm its identify. The high production of farm products, as will be shown in the tax records, and the property's agricultural out buildings that remain, allow the Pearce-Wheeler Farm to be viewed as a prosperous late-nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century operation.

HISTORIC CONTEXT: HART COUNTY AGRICULTURE, 1850-1930

Research Design

Several sources were consulted to learn what is presented here about Hart County's nineteenth- and early-twentieth-century agricultural history. Initial sources consulted included the Site Visit Report for HT249, the Pearce- Wheeler House and Farm by William J. Macintire; "The Pioneer Log House in Kentucky" by William J. Macintire; "The Pennyryle Cultural Landscape" by Charles E. Martin; the Stockton-Ray House National Register Nomination by Marty Perry; and the unpublished manuscript of the Wheeler-Lane Pictured Genealogy by Ruth Wheeler Weed. Other useful works include Dr. Thomas D. Clark's "The Beginning of the L&N", John F. Dorman's "Descendents of Jonathan F. Clark", the "Encyclopedia of Louisville" by J. Kleber and Hart County Tax Rolls 1848 through 1933.

The research program sought to identify typical patterns of farming in Hart County during the years when the Pearce-Wheeler Farm's buildings were constructed, i.e. beginning in the mid-nineteenth century through the first few years of the twentieth century. Building construction is taken as a useful indicator of that farm's activity patterns, because such construction requires a commitment of highly valued resources, particularly money and space. By looking at the subject farm's evolution, as depicted by its buildings and production records, and comparing that farm's activity with farming patterns in the county overall, more valid interpretation of the subject farm is possible. Thus, the research for this nomination sought to gauge the ability of the Pearce- Wheeler farm to illustrate relevant periods of Hart County's agricultural history.

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 8 Page 2

Name of Property: Pearce- Wheeler Farm
Location: Hart County, Kentucky

Hart County Agriculture: 1850-1930

This period was selected to encompass two major building campaigns on the Pearce-Wheeler house and an addition on the property of a large mule barn. The residence on the farm, built prior to 1848, was constructed in a similar style to that of Mulberry Hill, in Jefferson County, Ky., the house belonging to Pearce's great-grandfather, John Clark. Macintire dates the addition of the ell at the rear of the house and the addition of weather boarding to just prior to 1850. The mule barn was constructed at the turn of the century to implement the growing mule trading business initiated by W. R. Wheeler.

Martin states that soil characteristics for Kentucky have been divided into twelve regions, with the Pennyriple being "the most fertile area in the state after the extended Bluegrass region. Yet, because of typography, soil content and fertility vary enormously in the Pennyriple..." His study indicates that the Pearce—Wheeler Farm, as does much of Hart County, lies in an agricultural zone with well drained soils that support general farming. His physical description states that the area is "sloping sinkhole." However, the location of the Pearce-Wheeler Farm, in the river's bend, avoids the sinkhole problem, thus making the tilling of the farm much easier than the properties located just to the south which do display this problem. The result is that the Pearce-Wheeler Farm is in one of the most desirable locations in the area (Martin: 4-5).

County tax records were tabulated in an effort to establish a context within which to judge the farm's production, in comparison to the agricultural statistics presented in Martin's publication. These records verify the fact that the Pearce—Wheeler Farm was among Hart County and the Pennyriple's most productive and successful farms.

With respect to farm size, the 1850 census reveals that the average acreage per farm in Hart County was 293, where the Pearce Farm contained 775 acres. By 1860, Hart County average acreage had decreased to 160 acres per farm, while the Pearce farm was at 391. The 1870 census reveals that the majority of farms averaged 10 to 20 acres in size, while the Pearce farm, at 391, was one of 187 farms that contained between 100 to 500 acres.

In view of the information above, it is reasonable to conclude that Edmund Pearce was reducing the acreage of his Hart County Farm, not for economic reasons, for he was a successful land speculator in Louisville, as the worth of this property is revealed in the tax records. Instead, he appears to be purposely reducing the size of the farm from its original 1,000 acres, as is shown in his mother's inheritance from her father, Jonathan Clark and then passed to Edmund at his mother's death. This reduction to 391 acres may have allowed him to dispose of the less desirable acreage and make the farm into a more manageable size.

Other facts revealed in the 1850 census for the Mammoth Cave Sub-region of the Pennyrile, are that Hart County fell into the middle range of the number of farms per capita. It was third highest in percentage of farms improved and second highest in the value of improvements and implements per farm. Hart County ranked third in the region in the production of wheat, corn and tobacco. In 1850, Kentucky had nearly 3 million hogs, forty-four percent of which were located in the Pennyrile. The farms of the Pennyrile region that averaged the highest number of hogs per farm, raised about fifty per farm.

Kentucky's first Catalonian jack mule was imported in 1832, especially for breeding purposes. Jacks and jennets were imported from Spain during the 1850s, and the Kentucky mule was developing into an increasingly large and strong draft animal, bringing from \$100 to \$120 at market. Cotton belt plantations, using thirty-five to forty mules per farm, generally required four or five annual replacements. Kentucky, on the other hand, as records show, had only about two mules per farm. Most Pennyrile farmers used their mules for such personal uses as plowing and hauling. Though the average mules per farm remained low in the Pennyrile, there is evidence from the newspapers of that time, as Martin states, that specialized breeders were to be found in the state. At the turn of the century, W. R. Wheeler would become one of those mule traders.

Again, as Martin states, "Tobacco, brought in by farmers from Virginia at Kentucky's inception, was another product most strongly supported by the commercial farming counties." Though Kentucky usually ranked second in production behind either Virginia or North Carolina, by the close of the Civil War in 1865, the state was America's biggest tobacco grower. In 1850, Hart County's pounds per farm had reached 982. In 1870, Hart County reached an average of 1,004 pounds per acre.

By 1870, the category of "Average value of farms" was added to the statistics. The average value of a Hart County Farm was \$1,144.00, with Warren County ranking the highest in the sub-region at \$1,859.00. The value of the Pearce Farm, now in the possession of Claiborne Harlow, was listed as \$6,663.00. During this time period, Hart County ranked fourth in corn production, third in wheat production, and first in pounds of tobacco per farm, with an average of 1,004 pounds. By 1873, Harlow was producing 4,000 pounds of tobacco.

Dark tobacco thrived in most soils of the Pennyrile. "In 1920, the state Agricultural Experiment Station...divided dark and light tobaccos by a line extending from Cloverport in Breckinridge County on the Ohio River, to Monroe County on the Tennessee line, with dark leaf predomination to the west of the line." The white burley was much easier to bring full cycle than the dark leaf, and the east-central area of the Pennyrile, of which Hart County was a part, turned to this product. Not only was production less complicated, but it was easier to move this favored product to the Bluegrass region at market time.

Hart County, by 1880, remained the highest producer of tobacco in the Mammoth Cave Sub-region of the Pennyrile, at 1,034 pounds per farm. However, by the 1900 census, tobacco production in Hart County had dropped to an average of 855 pounds per acre. The drop in production averages may be due, at least in part, to what became known as the Tobacco Wars. In the 1890s, The American Tobacco Company was trying to create a monopoly in order to control prices over a wider geographical area. Violence ensued as vigilante societies were organized. To quote Martin once again; "When ranking counties as to tobacco production, it should be recalled that lower leaf production at this time was the result of the previous over-production at this time was the result of the previous over-production which would lead to the formation of both the tobacco trusts and the Black Patch Wars of 1905-09."

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Pearce- Wheeler Farm
Hart County, Kentucky

Section 8 Page 4

Martin reports that “the twenty years following the turn-of-the-century were active ones in America and in Western Kentucky. The war in Europe, beginning in 1914, created a situation where America became a chief supplier of munitions and food. Nearly all agricultural products were able to find a market...in Europe. After the war “...the need for American products continued.”

By 1920, Hart County led the Mammoth Cave sub-region as to the number of farms per capita and ranked high in the percentage of county acreage that was improved, though it now ranked in the lower percentages of the production of corn and wheat. The pounds of tobacco per acre had risen to a level of 1,691 per acre.

The tax tables that follow reveal the importance of the Pearce-Wheeler Farm in agriculture production in Hart County. They will show that the farm was well above average in the Pennyryle region. Tax records for Hart County are in good condition through 1874, but only sporadic years are available after that and those years that are available, are fragmented.

TABLE A: Edmund Pearce’s Ownership of Farm

Year	Owner	Acres	# Slaves	\$Value Slaves	# Horses	Value Horses	# Mules	Value Mules	# Cows	# Hogs	Lbs. Tobacco	Bushel Corn	Bushel Wheat	Total Value
1853	Pearce	391	9	\$4,200	7	\$350	0	\$0	12	30	0	0	0	\$13,440
1854	Pearce	390	10	\$4,900	7	\$570	0	\$0	15	60	0	0	0	\$15,570
1855	Pearce	400	10	\$4,900	5	\$570	0	\$0	10	50	0	0	0	\$15,570
1856	Pearce	400	10	\$4,900	6	\$430	0	\$0	16	40	0	0	0	\$21,535
1857	Pearce	400	11	\$5,000	9	\$540	0	\$0	14	50	0	0	0	\$16,640
1858	Pearce	400	11	\$5,000	6	\$450	5	\$450	15	24	0	0	0	\$17,050
1859	Pearce	400	12	\$6,000	6	\$360	7	\$500	14	40	14,000	1,400	200	\$21,410
1860	Pearce	400	12	\$6,000	5	\$300	8	\$800	14	40	7,000	2,250	180	\$22,075
1861	Pearce	400	12	\$5,500	4	\$320	5	\$510	16	30	6,000	1,500	150	\$18,220
1862	Pearce	400	12	\$4,000	4	\$260	5	\$400	14	20	15,000	1,800	400	\$13,760
1863	Pearce	400	12	\$3,600	3	\$150	6	\$450	20	30	1,100	1,500	60	\$14,250
1864	Pearce	400	12	\$2,400	5	\$400	5	\$400	13	0	0	0	0	\$16,300
1865	Pearce	400	13	\$ 800	4	\$500	5	\$500	17	25	10,000	1,500	450	\$16,300
1866	Pearce	400	0	NA	1	\$125	6	\$600	22	0	9,000	1,150	250	\$16,300
1867	Pearce	400	0	NA	2	\$225	11	\$300	11	0	11,100	1,000	200	\$16,475

Some of Pearce’s farm’s value on this chart is artificially heightened by the tax record combining the values of his holdings in both Hart and Jefferson County. For instance, his holdings in Louisville in 1853 were valued at \$5,000, valued at \$7,000 in 1855, at \$10,000 in 1859, and \$5,000 in 1862.

The tax table reveals important facts in the history of the Pearce-Wheeler Farm. The widower, Edmund Pearce and his three living children, were only part-time residents of the farm 1848-1852 (see Dorman records at Filson Society). It is evident by the property taxes that Pearce was a land speculator, as he was continuously buying and selling property in what is now the city of Louisville.

It appears that he was aware of plans for a railroad that would connect Louisville with Nashville. He most certainly would have been aware that two routes were proposed. According Dr. Thomas Clark's "The Beginnings of the L & N," former governor Ben Hardin Helm, who was president of the committee looking into the location of the railroad, was pushing for the route which was located along what is now Highway 31W. However, the most logical route would have been along what is now Highway 31E. This eastern route provided a narrower span to the Green River without the daunting task crossing a gorge such as the one at Muldraugh. The eastern route would have located the tracks very near to the land grant given to Pearce's grandfather, Jonathan Clark. It seems possible that Pearce, by 1853, saw the advantage in developing the Hart County farm, as a wider market might soon be open and very profitable.

Unfortunately for Pearce, the eastern route was not chosen. The choice of the western route was fraught with problems and was terribly over budget and behind schedule, especially because of the building of the Muldraugh trestle. This caused Helm to lose his job and the problem of the wide expanse of the Green River at Munfordville had yet to be addressed. When the last rail was laid in 1859, the bridge at that crossing would prove to be the second largest span in the world.

These statistics allow us to infer with reasonable certainty a number of things about the Pearce-Wheeler Farm. From its earliest days, the family enjoyed increased prosperity. From 1853 through 1858 the records reveal a high slave population. Lending credence to the emphasis on agriculture, horses, mules, cattle and hogs are shown, their numbers well above the averages for Hart County. In 1859, the crops of corn, wheat and tobacco were added, with the astounding number of 14,000 pounds of tobacco raised. Edmund Pearce was able to sustain the farm's production through 1867, two years after the slaves were freed, indicating that at least some of them remained to work on the farm.

Claiborne Harlow's Ownership of farm. Records available only until 1874:

Year	Owner	Acres	Ton Hay	Bu. Oats	# Horses	Value Horses	# Mules	Value Mules	# Cattle	# Hogs	Lbs. Tobacco	Bu. Corn	Bu. Wheat	Total Value
1868	Harlow	391	0	0	5	\$250	0	0	18	0	4,000	400	75	\$6,256
1869	Harlow	391	R E	C O	R D S		U N	A V	I L	A B	L E	FOR	1869	
1870	Harlow	391	0	0	6	\$440	0	0	18	46	0	1,500	200	\$6,663
1871	Harlow	390	0	0	8	\$600	0	0	23	26	0	1,500	0	?
1872	Harlow	390	0	0	9	\$650	0	0	15	0	1,500	1,250	150	\$6,750
1873	Harlow	391	0	0	6	\$300	0	0	11	0	4,000	1,000	70	\$6,545
1874	Harlow	391	0	0	4	\$160	0	0	11	0	2,000	280	0	\$6,447

During the ownership of Claiborne Harlow, from 1868 through 1885, the farm remained well above the averages for Hart County in every category. At sometime between 1874 and 1885, Harlow reduced his number of acres from 391 to 281. When he willed the farm to his daughter, Olevia and her husband, W. R. Wheeler, at his death in 1885, it is shown that the acreage had been reduced to 215 acres. With the reduction in acreage, Harlow's death, and other factors, the farm's productivity and value had descended precipitously. Records on the farm from 1885 show that it had only 4 horses, 7 cattle, 20 hogs. Its greatest money-maker seems to have been tobacco, for 12,000 pounds were recorded in county tax records, though the farm's overall value had fallen to \$2,595. From these data, it can be inferred that Harlow had either given parcels of land to his other children or sold them to other farmers. It was Olevia and W. R. Wheeler who received the land on which the house and outbuildings were located.

W. R. Wheeler and Olevia Harlow Wheeler until 1910, then Olevia Harlow Wheeler Ownership

Year	Owner	Acres	Ton Hay	Bu. Oats	# Horses	Value Horses	# Mules	Value Mules	# Cattle	# Hogs	Lbs. Tobacco	Bu. Corn	Bu. Wheat	Total Value
1887	Wheeler	215								40				\$2430
1888	Wheeler	254	5	300	2	\$100	2	\$100	8	14	1,000			\$3618
1902	Wheeler	200			5	\$200	12	\$360	12	21				\$3739
1911	Wheeler	200	4	200	1	\$16	7	\$100	2	6				\$7200
1927	Wheeler	321												\$8800

Though only sporadic records remain for Hart County after 1874, some were found for the period. The average value of a Hart County farm was \$1,049.00 in 1880. The Pearce-Wheeler Farm, now under the ownership of W. R. Wheeler, shows a worth of \$2,430, in 1887. The value had increased in 1888 to \$3,618.00, with a variety of products grown. An increase in the number of mules is shown in 1902, from two in 1901, to twelve 1902. This corresponds to the time when the large mule barn, still extant, was built.

Oral tradition and the work of Ruth Wheeler Weed and her brother, Henry Wheeler, fill in the gap between 1902 and 1911. It was during these early years of the twentieth century that W. R. Wheeler made a very important addition to the farm's collection of buildings, by constructing the mule barn. The family notes that the barn's size brought people from miles around to see it. The barn was built out of necessity for W.R.'s new and growing mule trading business. Leaflets are still in the possession of these family members that announce that Wheeler would be buying mules at certain times of the year. These mules would be wintered on the Pearce-Wheeler Farm and then sold to the southern market in the spring. As can be seen in the census of 1902, there was an increase in the number of mules on the farm, but with careful buying in late fall, after the census was taken, and with the selling in the spring, large numbers of the animals may never have appeared on the tax records. Ruth Wheeler Weed states in her writing that as many as fifty mules were on the farm at times. W. R. Wheeler died unexpectedly in 1910, leaving the farm to his widow, Olevia. Claiborne Harlow Wheeler was one of only two children in the family of thirteen that was over the age of sixteen when his father died, so the management fell to him. Most of the Wheeler children had left home—almost all of them resettling in Kansas.

Section 8 Page 7

It is not clear as to who was responsible for the addition of 121 acres, unless it was Claiborne Harlow Wheeler, who died six years later, in 1933. At that point, Wood Bowling Wheeler, the youngest of Olevia's children, moved his family to the farm, where he would live for the rest of his life. Ruth Wheeler Weed was two years old at the time of the move and Olevia would live with them for fourteen years, until she died in 1948.

Conclusion

The Pearce-Wheeler Farm, in Hart County Kentucky, is an outstanding example locally of an agricultural complex depicting the time period of 1853-1930. Edmund Pearce was a wealthy landowner in Louisville, Ky., when he first decided to develop the land that his grandfather, Jonathan Clark, had received as a land grant after the Revolutionary War. He was able to sustain the amazing output of the farm's products through the Civil War and for the two years following the conflict.

Claiborne Harlow was able to keep the complex well above the average production of a farm in Kentucky's Pennyryle region. His son-in-law, W. R. Wheeler, changed the focus of the farm in the early 1900s, when he developed a trade in mules with southern plantation owners. At Wheeler's death, his widow and two son's were able to keep the farm's value in a steady rise, as revealed through the available Hart County tax records.

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 1 Name of Property: Pearce-Wheeler Farm
Location: Hart County, Kentucky

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National Park Service

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CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 9 Page 2 Name of Property: Pearce-Wheeler Farm
Location: Hart County, Kentucky

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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Section 10 Page 1 Name of Property: Pearce-Wheeler Farm
Location: Hart County, Kentucky

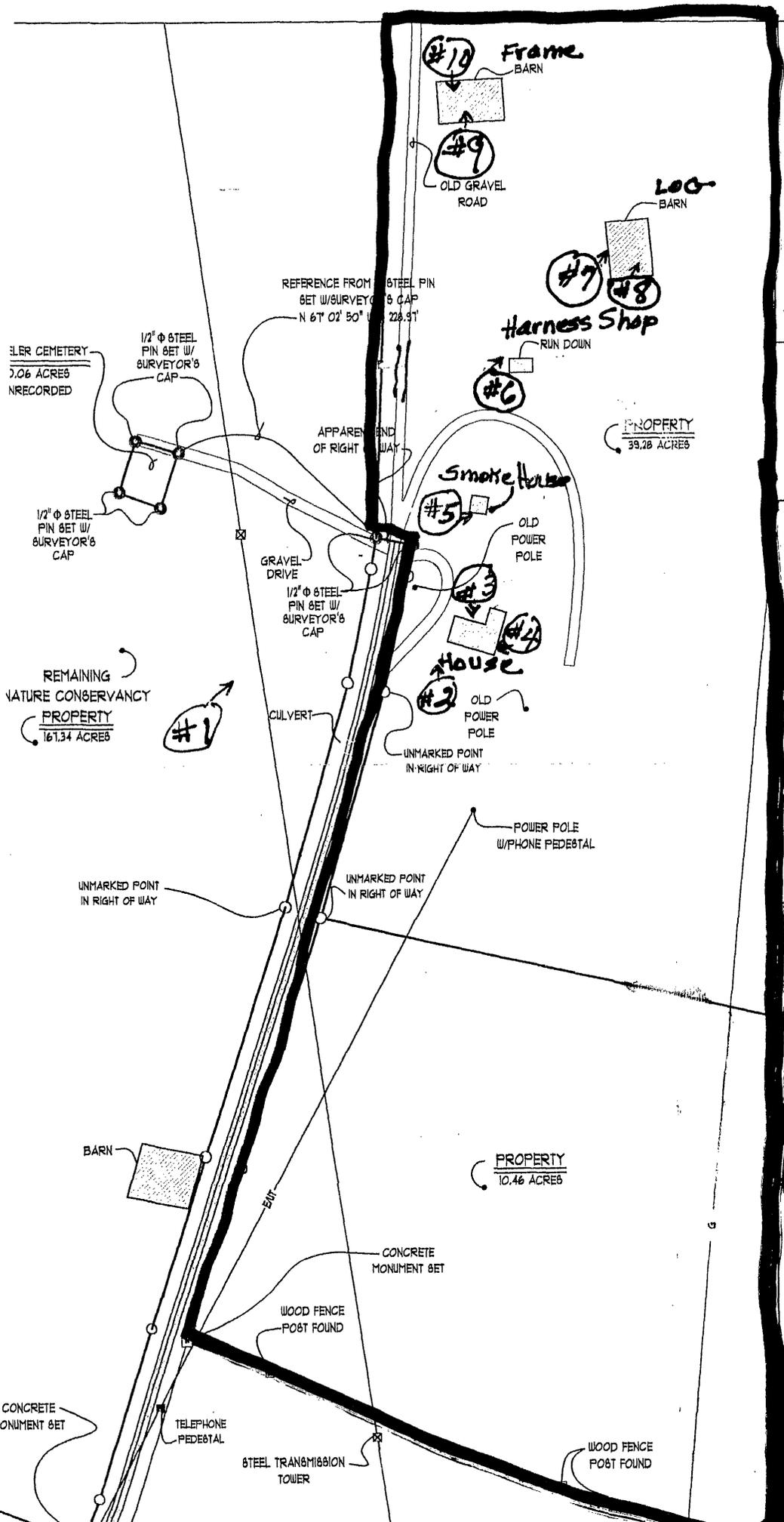
Verbal Boundary Description

(For reference, please see Hart County PVA aerial map #372-117, property #186).

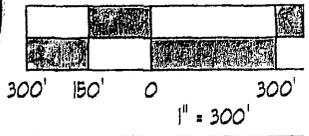
The 49.741 acres of the Pearce-Wheeler Farm (HT 249) currently owned by Mr. Bruce Cohen, sites at the end of Sims Cemetery Road in eastern Hart County, Kentucky, approximately seven miles northwest of the community of Canmer, Kentucky. The property is bounded on the east by the Green River, and on the north, west, and south by neighboring properties.

Boundary Justification

The 49.741 acres presently being nominated under Criterion A for the National Register represents an historic nineteenth and twentieth century agricultural complex in Hart County, Kentucky, still remain by a single land owner. Its house, three outbuildings, and two grave sites all lay within these property boundaries. To consider the Pearce-Wheeler Farm's historical significance necessitates the nomination of the entire agricultural property.



GRAPHIC SCALE



LEGEND

●	1/2" Ø STEEL PIN SET W/SURVEYOR'S CAP	△	
○	IRON PIN OR PIPE FOUND	○	F
▲	STEEL FENCE POST	□	"
■	TELEPHONE PEDESTAL	○	"

*Pearce-Wheeler Farm
Hart Co., Ky.*

— = National Register boundary
 (10) ↗ = Photo Number and direction

ELDER CEMETERY
3.06 ACRES
UNRECORDED

REMAINING NATURE CONSERVANCY PROPERTY
161.34 ACRES

REFERENCE FROM STEEL PIN SET W/SURVEYOR'S CAP
N 67° 02' 50" W 228.31'

PROPERTY
39.28 ACRES

PROPERTY
10.46 ACRES

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
CONTINUATION SHEET

Pearce-Wheeler Farm
Hart County, Kentucky

Section Photos Page 1

Same information for all photos:

Property: Pearce—Wheeler Farm

Location: Hart County, KY

Date of Photograph: 2005

Photographer: Joyce Trammell and Bruce Cohen

Location of Negatives: Owner's possession

Photographic specific information:

1. Pearce-Wheeler Farm (HT-249) Overview of farm, to the Northeast
2. Pearce-Wheeler Farm (HT-249) House, to the North
3. Pearce-Wheeler Farm (HT-249) House, to the South
4. Pearce-Wheeler Farm (HT-249) House, to the South-southwest
5. Pearce-Wheeler Farm (HT-249) Smokehouse, to the Northeast
6. Pearce-Wheeler Farm (HT-249) Ruins of Slave house/harness shop (under tarp)
Log barn and Mule barn, to the Northeast
7. Pearce-Wheeler Farm (HT-249) Log barn, to the Northeast
8. Pearce-Wheeler Farm (HT-249) Log barn, to the Northeast
9. Pearce-Wheeler Farm (HT-249) Mule barn, to the North
10. Pearce-Wheeler Farm (HT-249) Mule barn, to the South