

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED FEB 2 1977
DATE ENTERED NOV 17 1977

**NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM**

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC * Highfield (Willis Roberts House)

AND/OR COMMON
Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
303 North Adams Street

NOT FOR PUBLICATION
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

CITY, TOWN
Owenton

VICINITY OF

06

STATE
Kentucky

CODE
021

COUNTY
Owen

CODE
187

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE	
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Charles Carter

STREET & NUMBER
303 North Adams Street

CITY, TOWN
Owenton

VICINITY OF

STATE
Kentucky 40359

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Owen County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER
100 North Thomas

CITY, TOWN
Owenton

STATE
Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky (Supplement)

DATE
1974
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN
Frankfort

STATE
Kentucky

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Owenton, the small county seat of Owen County (see National Register form for the Owen County Courthouse and Jail listed on the National Register May 6, 1976), nevertheless boasts a number of grandiose Victorian residences scattered along the ridges that extend out from the town center. Many of the finest and most ambitious of these follow the east-west route to the west of the courthouse. Among them, Highfield stands out because of its considerable setback, extensive grounds, and relative age.

The house consists of a large five-bay two-story clapboarded block with two-story gallery in the center and a modernized two-story wing to one side. Although the overall appearance justifies the antebellum date of the house, the details of the cornice and gable brackets suggest that they were added somewhat later, although also perhaps just before the Civil War. Within the pediment is an unusual quatrefoil opening within a round arch.

The dwelling contains eleven rooms, with two hallways, in each of which is a stairway. All lumber used in the building was cut and sawed with crosscut saws, from trees on the premises, and all work was done at the site of erection. Window and door facings, window frames, and doors were made by hand. Door panels are said to represent a cross and open Bible. Shingles (replaced, probably in the mid-19th century by the existing standing-seam metal roof) were hand-hewn.

The residence now includes some modern improvements, such as electric heating, 3½ bathrooms, electric kitchen, and air conditioning.

The iron fence which surrounds the present property was erected by T. W. Staiar, owner in the 1890s, at a cost of \$1,100. It is in splendid condition.

A small octagonal gazebo adorns one corner of the sloping front lawn. There are also appropriate frame outbuildings at the rear of the house.

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW				
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

ca. 1840; ca. 1850s

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Highfield is one of the earliest and largest of the impressive 19th-century residences that distinguish the outskirts of Owenton, county seat of Owen County. The county, which lies along the Kentucky River between the Ohio River and Frankfort, has varied but fertile terrain. The house in its ridge-top setting, reflects the prosperity made possible by the productive farmland, although little is known of the man for whom the house was built in the late 1840s, Willis Roberts, or of succeeding owners.

The original tract of land surrounding Highfield (about 93 acres) included the entire west section of Owenton. In the year 1785 Robert Parker bought the land from the state of Virginia. The land patent was signed by Patrick Henry, Governor. Parker died about 1818, the land going to his six heirs. Andrew W. P. Parker then acquired the real estate and, at his demise, the heirs of Colonel John C. Bacon became the owners in 1839. There were 93 acres in the plot at this time, which sold for \$600.00. George Roberts purchased the land on July 25, 1839, and he, in turn, sold the same to Willis Roberts about 1840. Shortly afterwards Willis Roberts constructed the house that now occupies the site.

John C. Breckinridge is believed to have spoken from the porch of Highfield in the early 1850s, when he was campaigning for a seat in the U. S. Congress. Breckinridge (1821-1875), a prominent lawyer and politician, served in the State legislature in 1849, the U. S. Congress in 1851 and 1853, Vice President of the U. S. under Buchanan in 1856, U. S. Senator in 1861, and Secretary of War in the Confederate Cabinet.

In his campaigns for a Congressional seat in 1851 and again in 1853, Breckinridge received strong support from Owen County, which was crucial in his victories. In both elections, Breckinridge's Whig opponents were favored to win because of their firm backing in the inner Bluegrass counties. However, Breckinridge's overwhelming victories in Owen County and adjoining Scott County overcame the Whig candidates' support in the richer counties of the Bluegrass, giving him the victory. In genuine appreciation, the family and friends called Breckinridge's youngest son "Owen County," which name was soon shortened to Owen. His son was known by this name until adulthood (Heck, p.35).

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Heck, Frank H. Proud Kentuckian, John C. Breckinridge 1821-1875. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1976.

Owen County Court Records (Deed Book A, page 210 (1822); Deed Book 109, page 649).

Owenton News Herald. June 1940.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A

116	681811510	42673610
ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

B

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

C

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

D

ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
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11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Miss Louella Forsee

WEL

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Owen County Representative, Kentucky Heritage Commission

August 20, 1974

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

102 West Bryan

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Owenton

Kentucky

12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL

STATE

LOCAL

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

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Cedric W. Melton

TITLE

SHPO

DATE

1/26/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Robert B. Rethig

DATE

11/17/77

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

ATTEST:

Charles Albert

DATE

11-16-77

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

Property Highfield (Willis Roberts House)

77000640
Owen

State Kentucky Working Number 2.2.77.174

TECHNICAL

CONTROL

Photos 4
Maps 1

pl
OK 2.3.77

Outbuildings included

HISTORIAN

Accept
L.B. Franklin
4.19.77

ARCHITECTURAL HISTORIAN

Accept
elovich
4.19.77

ARCHEOLOGIST

OTHER

HAER

Inventory _____
Review _____

REVIEW UNIT CHIEF

Accept
Cole
4-25-77

BRANCH CHIEF

Thompson
11.16.77

KEEPER

Retting for Murtagh
11/17/77

National Register Write-up _____
Federal Register Entry 2.7.78

Send-back _____
Re-submit _____

Entered NOV 17 1977

INT:2106-74









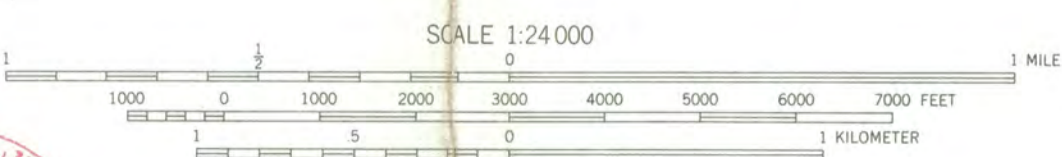


HIGHFIELD
UTM Reference:
16/688150/4267360

Highfield (Willis Roberts House)
Owenton, Kentucky.
Owen County.

U. S. G. S. Map, Owenton Quadrangle
7.5 Minute Series
Scale: 1:24 000
Date: 1950
UTM: 16/688150/4267360

Mapped, edited, and published by the Geological Survey
Control by USGS, USC&GS, and USCE
Topography from aerial photographs by multiple methods
Aerial photographs taken 1949. Field check 1950
Polyconic projection. 1927 North American datum
10,000-foot grid based on Kentucky coordinate system,
north zone
1000-meter Universal Transverse Mercator grid ticks,
zone 16, shown in blue



SCALE 1:24 000
CONTOUR INTERVAL 20 FEET
DATUM IS MEAN SEA LEVEL



ROAD CLASSIFICATION

Heavy-duty	4 LANE (6 LANE)	Light-duty
Medium-duty	4 LANE (6 LANE)	Unimproved dirt

U. S. Route State Route

OWENTON, KY.
SE/4 OWENTON 15' QUADRANGLE
N3830-W8445/7.5

1950
AMS 4061 III SE-SERIES V853

THIS MAP COMPLIES WITH NATIONAL MAP ACCURACY STANDARDS
FOR SALE BY U. S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, WASHINGTON, D. C. 20242,
KENTUCKY GEOLOGICAL SURVEY, LEXINGTON, KENTUCKY 40506,
AND KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, FRANKFORT, KENTUCKY 40601
A FOLDER DESCRIBING TOPOGRAPHIC MAPS AND SYMBOLS IS AVAILABLE ON REQUEST



northern kentucky area development district
106 tanners lane
florence, kentucky 41042
606-283-1885

g. f. mullins, executive director

May 1, 1975

RECEIVED
FEB 2 1975
KY. HERITAGE
COMMISSION

Mrs. Eldred W. Melton
State Historic Preservation Officer
401 Wapping Street
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

Dear Mrs. Melton:

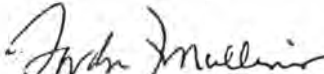
We are in receipt of your letter of April 3, 1975 regarding nomination of several sites in our district to the National Register of Historical Places.

On April 24, 1975, the Board of Directors of Northern Kentucky Area Development District reviewed these nominations and highly endorse the following:

- 1) Masterson House, Carrollton
- 2) Cincinnati and Covington Suspension Bridge, Covington
- 3) Highfield, Owenton
- 4) Owen County Courthouse and Jail, Owenton

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me at (606) 283-1885.

Respectfully,


Gordon F. Mullins
Executive Director

GFM:dm





Kentucky Heritage Commission

401 Wapping Street

Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

January 27, 1977

Dr. William J. Murtagh, Keeper
National Register of Historic Places
United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service
18th and C Streets, N. W.
Washington, D. C. 20240



Dear Dr. Murtagh:

The following nominations to the National Register of Historic Places were approved at the State level by the Kentucky Historic Preservation Review Board on the dates indicated. As State Historic Preservation Officer, I recommend they be entered on the National Register. Additional comments on the status of the sites may be attached to the appropriate forms.

<u>Name and Location of Site(s)</u>	<u>Date Approved at State Level</u>
Highfield (Willis Roberts House), Owenton, Owen County, Kentucky	March 25, 1975

Your early consideration of these nominations will be appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

Eldred W. Melton

Mrs. Eldred W. Melton
State Historic Preservation Officer

Enclosures (see List of Attachments)

cc: Ms. Faith Miller, Senator Huddleston's Office
Senator Wendell H. Ford's Office

Dr. William J. Murtagh

January 27, 1977

Page 2

Highfield (Willis Roberts House), Owen County, Kentucky

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

National Register of Historic Places Nomination Form

4 Photos

1 Map

Copy of letter from Gordon F. Mullins, Executive Director, Northern
Kentucky Area Development District.



ENTRIES IN THE NATIONAL REGISTER

STATE KENTUCKY

Date Entered NOV 17 1977

<u>Name</u>	<u>Location</u>
St. Theresa Roman Catholic Church	Rhodelia vicinity Meade County
Cedar Grove	Oak Grove vicinity Christian County
Highfield (Willis Roberts House)	Owenton Owen County

Also Notified

Hon. Wendell H. Ford

Hon. Walter (Dee) Huddleston

Hon. William H. Natcher

Hon. Carroll Hubbard, Jr.

Hon. John B. Breckinridge

Regional Director, Southeast Region

State Historic Preservation Officer
Mrs. Eldred W. Melton
Director, Kentucky Heritage Commission
104 Bridge Street
Frankfort, Kentucky 40601

880

Mott/js

11/21/77

NR Data Sheet

DATE: April 19, 1977
Reviewer INITIALS: LEBAWK
DOE
NOV 17 1977

NAME AS IT APPEARS IN FEDERAL REGISTER: Highfield (Willis Roberts House)

OTHER NAMES:

LOCATION:

STREET & NUMBER 303 N. Adams St.

CITY/TOWN Owenton

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 6th

STATE Kentucky 21

VICINITY OF

COUNTY code
Owen 187

OWNER OF PROPERTY: (Circle) PRIVATE STATE LOCAL GOV'T MUNICIPAL COUNTY OTHER

ADMINISTRATOR (underline)

FEDERAL (AGENCY NAME):

NPS REGION: (CIRCLE) N.ATLANTIC MID ATLANTIC SOUTHEAST MIDWEST

SOUTHWEST ROCKY MOUNTAIN WEST PACIFIC NORTHWEST

FEATURES:

INTERIOR EXTERIOR ENVIRONS
- Substantially intact-1 ✓ Substantially intact-2 ✓ Substantially intact-3 ✓
- unknown - 4 - unknown -5 - unknown -6
- not applicable - 7 - not applicable - 8 - Not applicable-9

- Interior, exterior, environs not intact-0

CONDITION - ✓ EXCELLENT - DETERIORATED - UNALTERED - ORIGINAL SITE
- GOOD - RUINS - ALTERED - MOVED
- FAIR - UNEXPOSED - Reconstructed - Unknown
- Unexcavated - Excavated

ACCESS - Yes-restricted Yes-unrestricted No access Unknown

historic district? YES NO

WITHIN NATIONAL REGISTER HISTORIC DISTRICT? YES NO
IF YES, NAME:

WITHIN NATIONAL HISTORIC LANDMARK? YES NO
IF YES, NAME:

ADAPTIVE USE: YES NO Saved? YES NO

FUNCTION(S): (use vocabulary words)
then- residential
now- residential

SIGNIFICANCE:

- | | | | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHAEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION | <input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION | <input type="checkbox"/> entertainment |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ARCHAEOLOGY-HISTORIC | <input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS | <input type="checkbox"/> LAW/Gov't/politics | <input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE | <input type="checkbox"/> health |
| <input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION | <input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE | <input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN | <input type="checkbox"/> recreation |
| <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE | <input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING | <input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY | <input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION | <input type="checkbox"/> settlement |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ART | <input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION | <input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC | <input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY) | <input type="checkbox"/> socio/cultural |
| <input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE | <input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY | <input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY | | <input type="checkbox"/> urban & commun |
| <input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS | <input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION | <input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT | | <input type="checkbox"/> planning |

Claims

"first" YES NO "oldest" YES NO "only" YES NO

ARCHITECTURAL STYLE:

architect/m.builder: *unknown*

landscape/garden designer:

interior decorator:

engineer:

artist/artisan:

builder/contractor:

ETHNIC GROUP:

NAMES:

personal

(label role
&
appropriate date)

events

institutional

DATES:

DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (Specific date or 1/4 of century): *c 1840, 50*

DATE(S) OF "MAJOR" ALTERATIONS: *20th alteration of fenestration*

HISTORICALLY SIGNIFICANT DATE(S):

SOURCE:

(OF NOMINATION)

PRIVATE

STATE

LOCAL GOV'T

MUNICIPAL

COUNTY

OTHER

FEDERAL AGENCY:

ACREAGE:

(to nearest tenth of an acre)

COMMENTS:

(include architectural information here)

3
Frame, parallel rectangles, 2 stories, gable, 2 story central porch with pediment, bracketed cornice
1/4 square foot within pediment

Outbuildings

SIGNIFICANCE: (maximum two sentences)

large, impressive 19thC residence