UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JAN 2 9 1980

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#### CONDITION

#### **CHECK ONE**

**CHECK ONE** 

XEXCELLENT

\_\_DETERIORATED

XUNALTERED ALTERED

XORIGINAL SITE

\_\_GOOD

\_\_UNEXPOSED

RUINS

\_\_MOVED DATE\_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Idlewild is located in rural Todd County in southwestern Kentucky. The house, which faces southwest, is approximately two miles from Trenton, and is situated above Spring Creek.

This two-story, five-bay brick structure is basically Greek Revival in style. Five course, common bond brickwork was used throughout the structure and the two end chimneys are flush with the walls. Stone lintels cap all the facade openings, with stone sills located beneath the windows.  $^{\rm l}$ 

The portico, together with the front cornice, appear to have been added around the late 19th or early 20th century. The portico is composed of Corinthian columns, a modillioned cornice, and a pyramidal roof. A 20th century wrought iron balcony was also added at the second floor level.

The structure has an original one-and-one-half story ell with an end chimney. Two recent windows were added on either side of the end chimney. A separate brick kitchen is situated to the rear of the ell. The dogtrot between has been enclosed.

A central-hall plan, most of Idlewild's original woodwork is intact. The door trim is simple with panelled jambs and bull's eye cornerblocks. The mantlepiece in the dining room (left front) has a breakfront shelf and panelled sides. The original mantle in the parlor (right front) has been replaced by a Colonial Revival one.

The nominated area includes the main house and a frame outbuilding on the west side of the main house (see photo 7)—consisting of approximately one acre, encorporating the domestic space defined on the sides and to the rear by fencing, and, on the front, extending to Hwy. 41.

All the windows throughout the remainder of the house have flat arches. Four windows on the northeast end have been altered to segmental arches.

## 8 SIGNIFICANCE

#### **PERIOD** AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW -PREHISTORIC ---ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC \_\_COMMUNITY PLANNING \_\_LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE \_\_RELIGION \_\_1400-1499 \_\_ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC \_\_CONSERVATION \_\_LAW \_\_SCIENCE \_\_1500-1599 \_\_AGRICULTURE \_\_ECONOMICS \_\_LITERATURE \_\_SCULPTURE \_\_1600-1699 **XARCHITECTURE** ...EDUCATION \_\_MILITARY \_\_SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN \_\_1700-1799 \_\_ART \_\_MUSIC \_\_ENGINEERING \_\_THEATER X1800-1899 \_\_.COMMERCE \_\_EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT \_\_PHILOSOPHY **X.TRANSPORTATION** \_\_1900-\_\_COMMUNICATIONS \_\_INDUSTRY \_\_\_POLITICS/GOVERNMENT \_\_OTHER (SPECIFY) \_\_INVENTION SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1830 BUILDER/ARCHITECT unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Idlewild, one of the few remaining antebellum houses in Todd County, Kentucky, is important because of its historic association with Colonel Elisha G. Sebree, a notable early figure prominent in Kentucky because of his interests in commerce, farming, coal, and railways in this section of the state.

Colonel Elisha G. Sebree was born in the Trenton district of Todd County, Kentucky, in 1817. He was the eldest son of Fendal J. Sebree and Martha C. (Garth) Sebree, natives of Albemarle County, Virginia, who had settled two miles south of Trenton in 1813. At the age of 14, Elisha Sebree became a clerk in the store of his uncle, Granville Garth, in Trenton. After five years in this capacity he began merchandizing for himself at Trenton. He remained in this business for about seven years. He next turned his attention to farming. He purchased the nucleus of his land at \$11.50 per acre and at one time owned about 1,700 acres, much of which was divided among his children before his death. For many years he was an active speculator in cotton and was engaged to a considerable extent in developing the rich coal mines of Hopkins County. He served in the lower house of the Kentucky General Assembly for two sessions from 1853 to 1857 and during the Civil War was a prominent Union supporter.

Perhaps Sebree's chief claim to fame was the prominent role he played in the building of the Evansville, Henderson, and Nashville Railroad. It was primarily through his efforts that it was completed. It was planned to run from Henderson, Kentucky, to a point on the Kentucky and Tennessee state line to connect with the Edgefield and Kentucky Railroad thus making a line from Henderson to Nashville. For twenty-five years, from 1853 to 1878, Colonel Sebree's interests, energy, and fortune were tied up with this railroad venture. He finally obtained clear rights to the railroad in 1867 despite his failure to secure financing through bonds in London, England in 1854, the Civil War, and financial complications afterwards resulting in civil litigation. Much of the original grading before 1857 was done under his personal supervision. In 1878 he sold a controlling interest in the bonds of the railroad to the Louisville and Nashville Railroad Company. His faith in the enterprise and his energy and exertion finally pushed this railroad project to completion thereby opening to outside markets the fine mineral and agricultural

## 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Williams, Frances Marion. The Story of Todd County, Kentucky 1820-1970.

Nashville: The Parthenon Press, 1972.

Battle, J.H. and W.H. Perrin, eds., <u>Counties of Todd and Christian Kentucky:</u>

<u>Historical and Biographical</u>. Chicago and Louisville: F.A. Battey Publishing
Co., 1884.

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Frankfort			Kentucky	
STATE HISTORIC PR	ESERVATION	OFFICER (	CERTIFICATIO	N
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KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL RE TEST: Kristin O'Cou	GISTER		DATE 7/	10/80
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION				<del>/ 80</del>

# UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM



Idlewild

**CONTINUATION SHEET** 

ITEM NUMBER

PAGE 2

resources of this area. The completion of the railroad made the vast coal property owned by the St. Bernard Coal Company extremely valuable. Colonel Sebree served as its president upon its organization.

Colonel Sebree was married to Sidney Louise Morrison. In 1846 they purchased Idlewild, which had been built in 1830. It is still owned today by one of their grandchildren.

Constructed in 1830, Idelwild is one of few antebellum houses in the area of this style and proportion. The large scale and massing lend an imposing air to the house which can be viewed from the main road. The main portico is especially fine with Corinthian columns and scroll motifs under the cornice.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

APR 10 1990

Idlewild
Todd County
Kentucky
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10

PAGE

## ADDENDUM

Verbal Boundary Description:

Beginning at the point where the southwestern edge of the driveway and Highway 41 meet, the boundary travels 200 feet northeast to a point at the rear property line; turns northwest 200 feet; turns southwest 200 feet; travels along the northeastern side of Highway 41, 200 feet returning to the point of origin.