

OMB NO. 1024-0018  
EXP. 12/31/84

United States Department of the Interior  
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places  
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only  
received SEP 27 1982  
date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*  
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic "Maxwell Place" (Judge James Hillary Mulligan House)

and/or common "Maxwell Place"

2. Location

street & number Rose Street, University of Kentucky not for publication

city, town Lexington NA vicinity of congressional district

state Kentucky code 021 county Fayette code 067

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	<b>Public Acquisition</b>	<b>Accessible</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
	N/A	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name University of Kentucky

street & number South Limestone Street

city, town Lexington NA vicinity of state Kentucky

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Fayette County Courthouse

street & number 251 West Main Street

city, town Lexington state Kentucky

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory has this property been determined eligible?  yes  no

date September 1982  federal  state  county  local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Council

city, town Frankfort state Kentucky

## 7. Description

<b>Condition</b>		<b>Check one</b>	<b>Check one</b>
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" 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

"Maxwell Place" is set among mature plantings along Rose Street on the eastern edge of the present University of Kentucky main campus. Although now crowded by academic buildings on three sides, the grounds are surrounded by a handsome iron railing with brick coping and piers, which encloses the well-maintained lawns, magnificent old trees, and irregularly planted shrubbery that frame the house (Photo 1).

The residence is located on a ridge that runs approximately east-west southeast of downtown Lexington. It faces north, and originally overlooked the Maxwell Springs, a series of three natural springs located along a shallow valley, whose streams flowed northwestward into the Town Branch of the middle fork of South Elkhorn Creek in the center of downtown Lexington. The original 13½-acre grounds of the house sloped down beyond the front (north) several hundred yards from the house. In the hill side was a prolific spring that was channelled down to a well among picturesque paths and plantings until well after the turn of the century (see old photographs from the Charles E. Nollau Collection of Glass Negatives in the Special Collections of the Margaret I. King Library, University of Kentucky).

The present Fine Arts Building directly north of the Maxwell Place grounds was constructed about 1950 on the site of these landscape features. The Margaret I. King Library was erected in 1931 (and since enlarged) just west of the grounds, and the Chemistry-Physics Building in the early 1960s immediately beyond the yard and brick garage behind the house. Nevertheless, the density of the planting still allows a sense of enclosure and privacy for the house itself. A short drive curves up from formal gates off Rose Street to the east, past a wide circle in front of the main entrance pergola, to the service entrance on the west side of the house.

"Maxwell Place" itself is a large 2½-story Italianate brick villa with a three-story central entrance tower. Although the residence is now basically cubic because of additions and enclosures at the rear, the main front section still suggests the typical post-Civil War T-plan, with the projection of the dining-room wing and its bay-window on the west side hinting at a cross-axis. The library wing to the right of the recessed vestibule under the tower projects slightly forward, with a one-story semi-octagonal bay-window on the front. The parlor wing on the left is set back to the rear plane of the tower. A unique photograph of the house prior to 1900 (see Photo 8; E.I. Thompson of Lexington also owns an unsigned original architect's elevation drawing of the west side) shows a handsome Italianate one-story porch in front of the parlor wing; this has since been enclosed and simplified. There is a pair of rectangular one-story bay-windows on the east side of the house facing Rose Street.

Probably after the University acquired the property in 1917, the exterior as well as the interior was somewhat modernized, with several later additions, and a long, narrow pergola was extended from the tower vestibule to the circular drive (see Photo 2). This feature, like several of the replaced mantelpieces inside, is in itself an attractive example of early twentieth-century Arts and Crafts design; it has plain square brick piers supporting closely-spaced beams with elaborately-shaped projecting beam-ends and glass-enclosed sides.

Originally the tower, which now has a low hipped roof like the rest of the house, was topped by a concave-sided pyramidal roof or "belvedere." This is shown in the old photograph with a round-arched dormer on each face and a diminutive circular opening on each side of the very slender pinnacle. Apparently there was also an enriched balcony under the pair

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

**Specific dates** 1870-72      **Builder/Architect** Unknown

**Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)**

"Maxwell Place," a large brick Italianate villa, has served as the home of the presidents of the University of Kentucky since 1917, when the institution's third president began his more than 20-year term. As such it has housed a number of distinguished educators and has been at the core of campus social and cultural life for well over half a century. The house was built about 1870 for Judge James H. Mulligan, an attorney, state legislator, diplomat, and author, who carried on his father's leadership of the local Democratic party and achieved international fame for his poem, "In Kentucky." Mulligan and his two wives also made the lavish dwelling a Lexington social and cultural center before the turn of the century. Although the interior of Maxwell Place (named in honor of pioneer John Maxwell, part of whose 1,000-acre estate became the basis for the University campus) has been modernized to serve the quasi-public role of the president and his family and the exterior has been somewhat altered, the picturesque massing and some characteristic original details create a distinctive image. Moreover, the enclosed grounds are richly landscaped and create a haven of quiet within the busy campus.

The history of Maxwell Place was intertwined with that of the city and the university long before the latter achieved its present stature as the leading educational institution of the Commonwealth. John Maxwell (1747-1819) was one of the founders of Lexington (he is said to have named the original encampment in 1775, soon after the recent Battle of Lexington, Massachusetts; see the National Register form for McConnell's Spring). He became a leading early citizen of the growing community. In 1798 he acquired from fellow-settler Robert Patterson a 1,000-acre tract encompassing most of the southeast quadrant of nineteenth-century Lexington. Two of his sons-in-law, builders Hallett M. Winslow and Luther Stephens, subdivided much of the western part of the land after Maxwell's death (see South Hill Residential District National Register form).

Maxwell himself evidently designated a considerable area, including three important springs known as Maxwell Springs (now built over) in a shallow valley along present Euclid (formerly Winslow) Avenue, as public ground. This park area, later the core of the University of Kentucky campus, was used as a popular meeting place for Fourth of July and other celebrations, political gatherings, and militia musters. Troops were assembled here for the Indian Wars, the War of 1812, the Mexican War, and the Civil War. It was probably this military role that led statesman Henry Clay, whose "Ashland" estate was nearby on the same ridge on which Maxwell Place is located, to state that "No man can call himself a true Kentuckian who has not watered his horse at Maxwell Springs."

By the mid-nineteenth-century the still-undeveloped Maxwell family tract included a 13½-acre strip along Rose Street (originally Van Pelt's Lane) and fifty or more acres to the north and west. A dwelling occupied by John Love and later Thomas W. Bullock (see the ca. 1855 bird's-eye-view and map of Lexington) was located on the ridge-top site of the present Maxwell Place. The Maxwell Springs Company bought the park property from the Maxwell heirs in 1850 for the Kentucky Agricultural and Mechanical Association, which

(continued)

# 9. Major Bibliographical References

See continuation sheet.

# 10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property 2.44

Quadrangle name Lexington West

Quadrangle scale 1:24,000

### UMT References

A 

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7	1	9	1	4	5
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4	2	1	2	5	8	0
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Zone Easting Northing

B 

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Zone Easting Northing

C 

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D 

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H 

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### Verbal boundary description and justification

See continuation sheet.

### List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state NA code NA county NA code NA

state NA code NA county NA code NA

# 11. Form Prepared By

name/title Walter E. Langsam, Architectural Historian and Consultant

organization Lexington-Fayette County Historic Comm. date September 1982

street & number 253 Market Street telephone (606) 255-8312

city or town Lexington state Kentucky 40508

# 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 Mary Carson App.

title State Historic Preservation Officer date Sept 17, 1982

For NPS use only  
I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register  
Entered in the National Register  
date 10/29/82  
Reaper of the National Register  
Attest: [Signature] date  
Chief of Registration

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of round-arched windows with stone hoodmolds on the third story of the tower. There are now rather simple, widely-spaced brackets under the projecting cornice with a raised band of brick defining their lower edge, but originally there seem to have been low gables over the front wings like ones still on the sides, and perhaps more brackets (see Photo 3).

A prominent feature of the exterior is the stone trim, particularly the fairly small but emphatic alternating quoins on the tower and corners of the front blocks and side bay. The lintels throughout the house are plain blocks of golden limestone (possibly some of these were replaced to match those of the additions). The windows, many of which are double, have long one-over-one-pane sash, although the various enclosed porches at the rear and sides have multiple panes. The pergola leads to the recessed vestibule, which has tall openings on three sides. The front opening now has louvered swinging doors; the east leads to the enclosed porch in front of the parlor; and the segmental-arched main entrance doorway is on the south. The last has original Italianate raised-molding panels, but the doorframe, arched transom, and sidelights appear to date from the end of the nineteenth-century, as they have incised parallel lines in the "Eastlake" manner (see Photo 4). This indicates that the house was somewhat remodelled for the original owners in the 1890s.

The interiors retain splendid large spaces and high ceilings on the first floor, but virtually all the original woodwork, including mantels and frames, has been replaced, although, again, some of the tiled mantels have an appeal of their own (see Photo 7). The double parlors on the east side have been thrown together to form one long, narrow reception room. A new library and an enclosed porch have been built at the rear of the parlor and stairhall, filling in the block beside the original service ell on the west. Other changes have been made to improve circulation between the former front library, the original dining room and back stairs, and the service areas along the west side. Ceilings upstairs have been lowered and, of course, modern facilities have been installed throughout.

The major interior feature dating from the Mulligan occupation of the house is the grand staircase, which rises in a long flight along the west side of the central hall (Photo 5). It turns back on itself near the top, with a railing continuing around the well of the landing (Photo 6); the stringers and railings are Italianate. The lower newel is especially handsome; it is square with vertical quarter-circle strips at the edges and some incised ornament. At least the newel seems contemporary with the inner main entrance, rather than with the original construction of the building ca. 1870 (a former mantel probably dating from the same period, as well as some original woodwork, is shown in Thompson, p. 6).

The original appearance of the house seems to have been somewhat different from that of the usual post-Civil War Lexington Italianate villa, most of which were probably designed by either John McMurtry or Cincinnatus Shryock (see Lancaster, Chapter 7). The one surviving architectural drawing is unsigned. Two possible alternative candidates for the architect of Maxwell Place however, are Thomas W. Boyd of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Phelix L. Lundin of Lexington. Boyd was responsible for the Italianate-Second Empire design of the Scott and Jessamine County, Kentucky, courthouses of the 1870s, the impressive former Fayette County Courthouse in Lexington of 1883-84, as well as at least one attributed villa in Georgetown (see East Main Street Residential District National Register form) that has quoins and other features similar to those of Maxwell Place in its original form.

(continued)

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Lundin, a Swedish native who practiced in Lexington from about 1870 until his death in 1886, designed many important civic, commercial, residential, and other structures in the Lexington area. These included the 1879 Jackson Hall (the city hall and market), the rebuilt 1879 Phoenix Hotel, and the 1882 Floral Hall. The general composition of Maxwell Place and in particular the concave roof originally on the tower resemble those of a house shown in the engraving of a side elevation in Lundin's 1875 advertisements in the Lexington Daily Press (see Photo 9); although such vignettes are often standardized, this one is not known to have been used for other architects in the area, so may well represent one of Lundin's earlier Blue Grass designs). Thus, both Lundin and Boyd (who probably coincidentally later in the nineteenth century designed at least two buildings for the State University campus) received commissions with possible civic and political connections to both Dennis and J.H. Mulligan, the original clients for Maxwell Place.

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held their important annual fairs here until the Civil War. These did much to improve the quality of agriculture and industry in the Blue Grass region. The impressive circular amphitheater built here by John McMurtry in the early 1850s, along with the Bullock house and other buildings, was burned in 1861, when there was an extensive Union encampment and hospital around the springs.

After the war Dennis Mulligan (1817-1901), as the "most active and leading member" of the Lexington City Council, was instrumental in having the city acquire the remaining land for use as a public park, the Agricultural and Mechanical Association, having moved farther west (see National Register Form for Floral Hall). He also acquired in 1866 the strip along Rose Street, supposedly to prevent its being subdivided for a Negro "town," like a number of other speculative "urban enclaves" in the area, such as Pralltown and the former Adamstown.

In 1870-72 Dennis Mulligan, a wealthy self-made Irish-born merchant, philanthropist, and influential Democratic political leader (or "boss"; see the National Register form for his long-time grocery store and political haunt, 137 South Limestone Street, known as Will Morton's Tavern Stand), had the present "Maxwell Place" mansion built for his only son, James Hilary Mulligan (1844-1915) and the latter's first wife, Mary Huston Jackson, member of several prominent central Kentucky families, whom he had married in 1868.

Although slightly less conservative, J.H. Mulligan to a considerable extent carried on his father's civic and political leadership, gaining additional renown as an attorney, diplomat and author. Educated in Kentucky, Montreal, and France, he was admitted to the Lexington bar in 1867, soon joining the respected law firm that became Huston, Downing & Mulligan, and continued as Mulligan and Beauchamp until the senior partner's retirement in 1904 (after a family scandal recounted by Thompson and others). From the beginning of his career Mulligan was also active as a journalist and orator, making speeches at special university occasions, for instance. From 1870 to 1875 he was Judge of the Recorder's Court in Lexington, retaining this title for the rest of his life. He served conspicuously in the Kentucky House of Representatives 1881-1889 and in the State Senate 1890-94, where he was active during the adoption of the present Kentucky Constitution. Mulligan's most famous and effective political speech was delivered in the State Senate, when he nominated John G. Carlisle (later a distinguished Secretary of the Treasury; see the National Register form for his home in Covington, Kentucky) to fill the vacancy caused by the death of United States Senator James B. Beck in 1890 (see National Register form for his Lexington residence at 209 East High Street).

In return for this successful nomination, President Grover Cleveland appointed Mulligan Consul to Samoa in the South Pacific, where he remained 1894-95. One of the last friends and later a notable collector of the works and memorabilia of the popular English writer Robert Louis Stevenson, Mulligan later published an important treatise on the Samoan Islands. After his resignation from the Samoan post, Mulligan refused the president's offer of an appointment as consul-general to Capetown, South Africa, narrowly missing (to his later regret) involvement in the Boer War.

Instead, Mulligan returned in 1896 to his beloved Lexington, where his beautiful second wife, Genevieve Morgan Williams of Nashville, Tennessee (a cousin of Confederate General

(continued)

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John Hunt Morgan of Lexington and other notable figures) had made Maxwell Place the center of a brilliant social and cultural life, although Judge Mulligan was at this period less active in legal and political affairs. He is probably best-known, however, both outside and within his native state, as the author of "In Kentucky," a set of verses he first read at a banquet for the Kentucky Legislature at the old Phoenix Hotel in 1902. Although virtually doggerel, this semi-comic and yet in some respects deadly accurate poem struck a responsive spark in not only his listeners, but millions of others since the turn of the century.

After Judge Mulligan's death in 1915, following a tragic decade-long separation from his wife, who died only a few days before him, the 13½-acre property and residence were sold for \$40,000 to the University of Kentucky, whose trustees probably intended from the start to use it as the president's house. The university was at that time at a crucial turning point between the 40-year regime of the first president, James K. Patterson, who had shepherded the budding institution through its early development, and the equally formative tenure of the third president, Frank LeRond McVey.

The present University of Kentucky (as it has been called since 1907), grew out of the State Agricultural and Mechanical College (an appropriate successor to the Association), which was established immediately after the Civil War as a "land-grant college" under the Morrill Act of 1862. Originally it was part of the reorganized Transylvania University (see National Historic Landmark form for Morrison College), then called Kentucky University. The Agricultural and Mechanical College was originally located on the former "Ashland" estate of Henry Clay and his son-in-law's adjoining property, "Woodlands."

The State Agricultural and Mechanical College was detached from Transylvania/Kentucky University in 1878, and was re-located on the former Maxwell Springs city park, which had been somewhat reclaimed from the devastation left by the Civil War (nearly all the virgin trees had been felled by the troops). Lexington and Fayette County offered the park site, along with a bonding capacity of \$50,000, to induce the college to remain in Lexington. The head of the college for nine years had been James K. Patterson, who remained president of the new State University until his retirement in 1910. Having presided over the successful growth of the institution for some forty years, he and his family retained occupancy of the original president's house, one of the four original buildings completed on the present campus during 1880-1882, when the University re-opened here.

After the interim presidency of Judge Henry S. Barker, 1911-17, Frank McVey took over in 1917, retiring only in 1940. Apparently use of the recently acquired Maxwell Place as his home was a condition of his initial contract, and several "improvements," such as the entrance pergola and Arts and Crafts tile mantels, were probably made at this time or slightly later. It was McVey who developed the modern university, weathering the Depression and vastly increasing not only the physical plant, but also its scholarly reputation and role as the leading university in Kentucky. Mrs. McVey was also a popular hostess, using the enlarged and remodelled residence to entertain generations of townspeople, university supporters and distinguished visitors, faculty, and students.

This tradition has been maintained by the succeeding presidents and their wives. Dr. Herman L. Donovan, president 1941-56, administered the institution during the difficult years of World War II and the perhaps even more challenging decade of rapid expansion after the war. Not only were quantities of returning veterans accommodated, but the



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professional medical schools were established. His successors have been Frank G. Dickey (1956-63), A.P. Albright (1963), John W. Oswald (1963-69), and the present incumbent, Otis A. Singletary, each of whom has made significant contributions.

Although the interior has been altered to meet their tastes and the demand for large-scale entertainment, while the grounds have somewhat diminished with the construction of academic buildings on three sides, Maxwell Place remains the symbolic heart of the university's social life, continuing the gracious tradition established by the Mulligans over a century ago.

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Page 1

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Fayette County Deed Book 43, p. 71.

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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CONTINUATION SHEET "Maxwell Place" ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

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Verbal boundary description and justification.

The nominated property begins at a point (4) approximately 800 feet northeast of the northeast corner of Rose Street and Funkhouser Drive and proceeds northwest 305 feet to a point (5), thence northeast along a line which follows the fence row, 310 feet to a point (1) thence southeast 260 feet along a line following the fence line to a point (2) thence southeast 50 feet to a point (3) thence southwest along Rose Street 375 feet to the point of origin, thereby incorporating the house and surrounding lawn with its handsome plantings.

1,927,000E



CENT. BUS

PATTERSON DR.

DIS.

ROSE LANE

STREET

U. K. Campus

FUNKHOUSER

LIBRARY DRIVE

GRAHAM AVE

GLADSTONE

COLUMBIA

SORORITY DR.

AVENUE

983+

CLIFTON

AVENUE

PENNSYLVANIA

+991

+987

HILLTOP

AVENUE

PENNSYLVANIA AVE

HUGUELET

DRIVE

975

CLIFTON

+997

+987

961x

975

983+

950

+97

+984

+975

966

+96

975

989+

+991

+989

+979

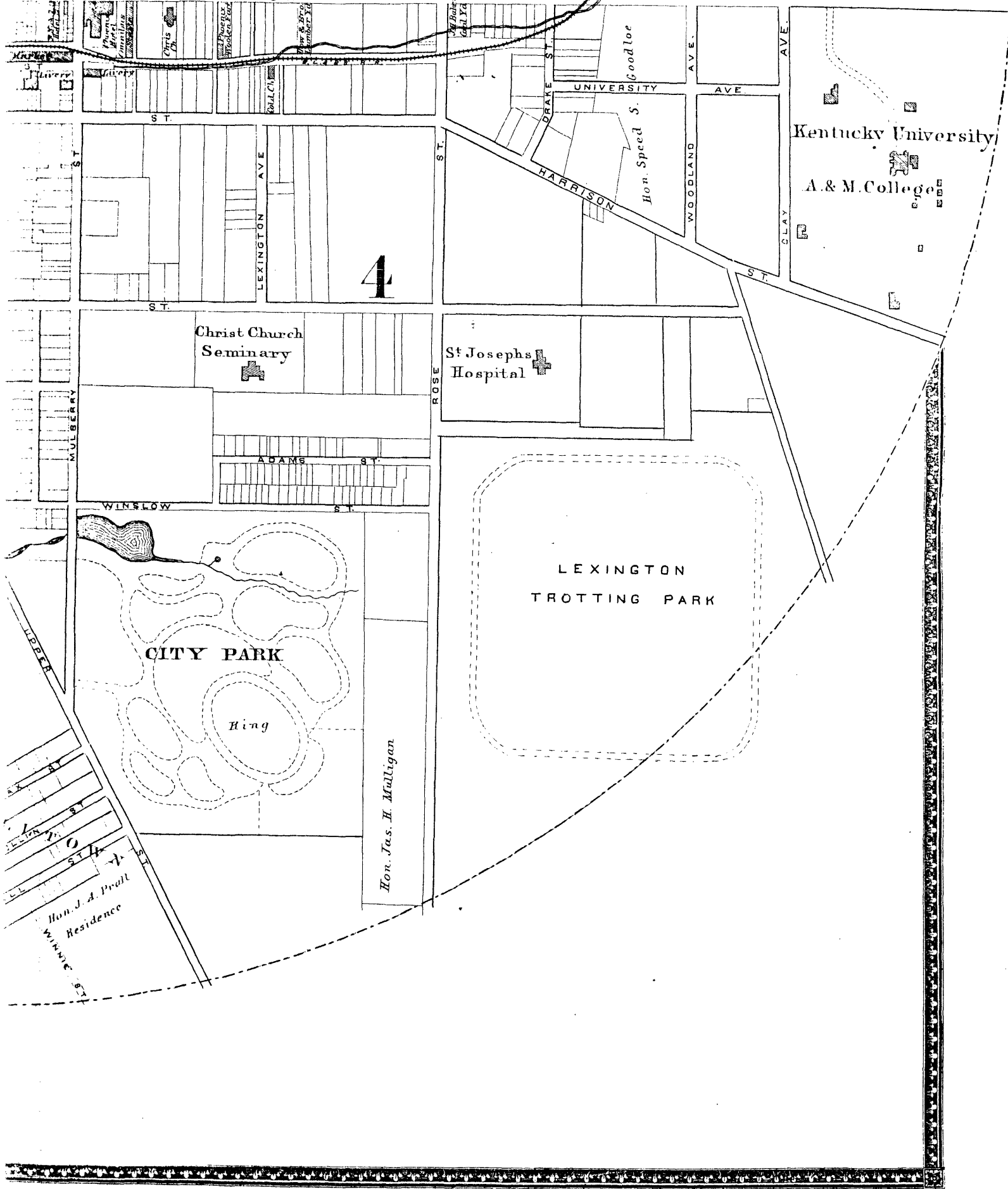
+973

+971

+982

+991

"Maxwell Place"  
Fayette County, Kentucky  
Planning Commission Map  
Current  
Scale 1" = 200 ft.  
Map 1 of 3



Kentucky University  
A & M. College

4

Christ Church  
Seminary

St. Josephs  
Hospital

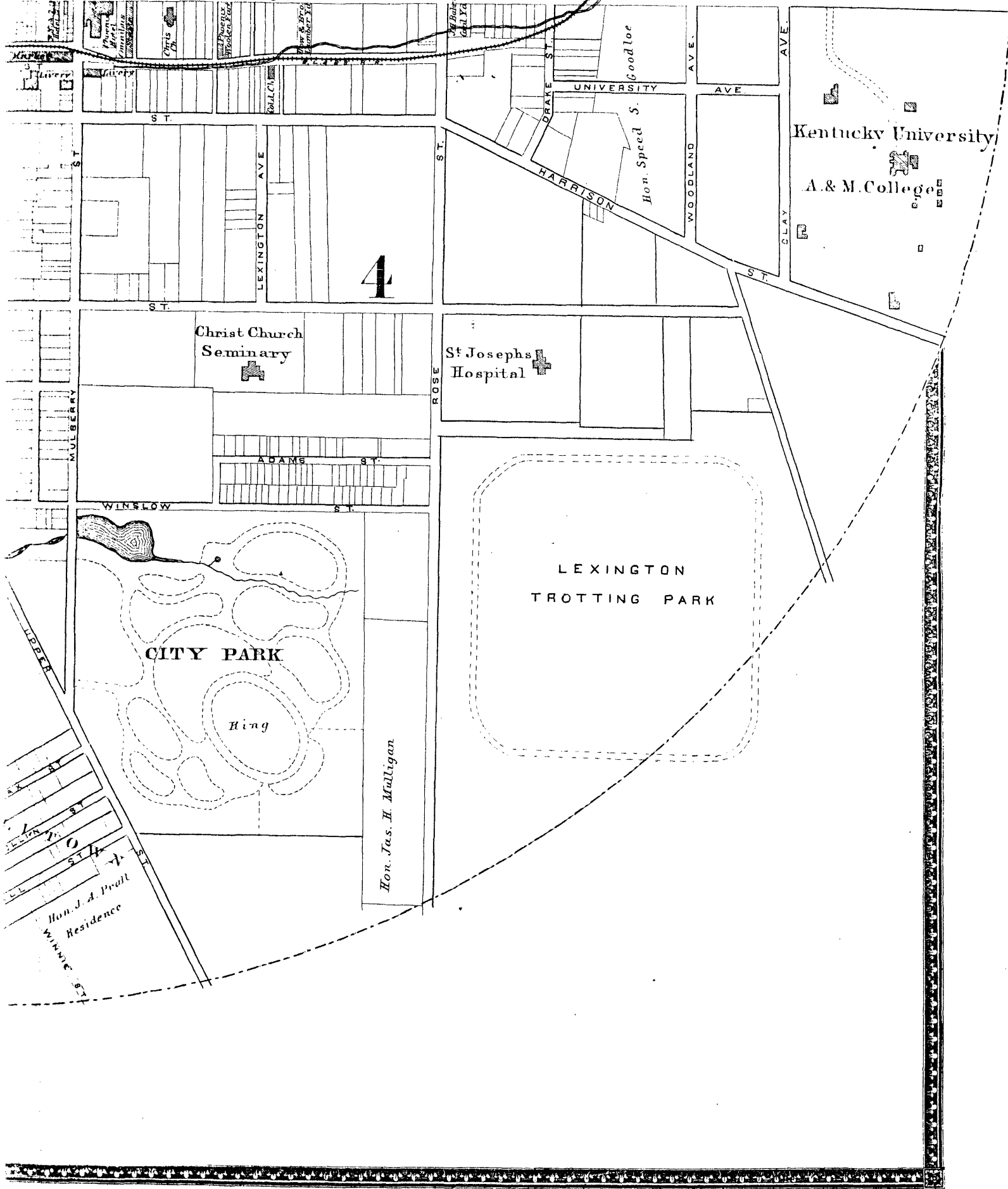
CITY PARK

LEXINGTON  
TROTTING PARK

Hing

Hon. Jas. H. Mulligan

Hon. J. A. Prall  
Residence



"Maxwell Place"  
Fayette County, Kentucky  
Atlas of Bourbon, Clark, Fayette,  
Jessamine and Woodward Counties, Ky.  
1877  
Scale 1" = 425 feet  
Map 3 of 3

Note former site of University at upper right  
(east). The Mulligan property is shown at the  
lower center (south) adjacent to the City  
Park, now the main campus of the University  
of Kentucky.

Pamphlets.

Books.

PRINTED AT

ESS OFFICE.

MISCELLANEOUS.

KINGSFORD'S  
OR WHEAT

PURE AND

er Gloss Starch,

of the Laundry.

MANUFACTURED BY

KINGSFORD & SON,

Best Starch in the World.

A BEAUTIFUL FINISH TO THE  
and the difference in cost between it  
on starch is scarcely half a cent  
inary washing. Ask your Grocer

KINGSFORD'S

GO CORN STARCH,

puddings, Blanc Mange,  
Ice Cream, &c.,

inal—Established in 1848. And  
its reputation as PURER,

LONGER and MORE DELI-

CATE than any other ar-

ticle of the kind

her of the same name or with oth-

ON MACADAM, Ph. D., &c., the  
emical authority of Europe, care-

ased this Corn Starch, and says it  
excellent article of diet, and in

and feeding properties is fully  
e best arrow root.

is for making Puddings, Custards,  
peny each one pound package.

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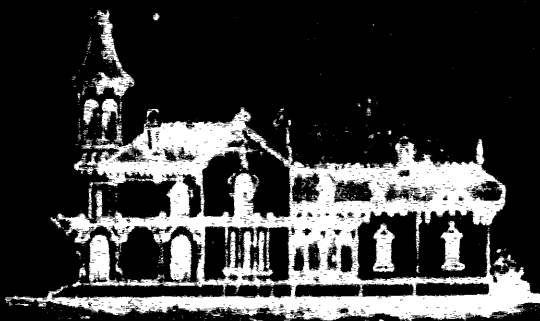
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Photo 9 of 9  
Advertisement for architect Phelix L.  
Lundin showing somewhat similar villa  
in side-elevation. From an engraving  
in The Lexington Daily Press, May 8,  
1875, page 2.