Form No. 10-300	(Rev. 10-74)
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## PH\$ 365\$76

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

# DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY

APR 1 4 1977 RECEIVED

DATE ENTERED

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

1 NAME				
HISTORIC	tt-Cole Tavern			
AND/OR COMMON			- <u> </u>	
	tt Inn; Cole's Tavern;	Black Horse Tavern	······································	
2 LOCATION	Maty enally			
STREET & NUMBER	Tr + .	e d		
on U. S. 62 at the	e crossing of Old Frank	fort and Lexington Pik		
CITY, TOWN	x	VICINITY OF Versailles	CONGRESSIONAL DISTR	ICT
STATE		CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Kentucky		021	Woodford	239
	ATION			
CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRES	ENTUSE
DISTRICT		X OCCUPIED	AGRICULTURE	MUSEUM
		UNOCCUPIED	COMMERCIAL	PARK
	BOTH	-WORK IN PROGRESS	EDUCATIONAL	XPRIVATE RESIDENC
SITE OBJECT	PUBLIC ACQUISITION		ENTERTAINMENT	RELIGIOUS
_OBJECT	IN PROCESS		GOVERNMENT	SCIENTIFIC
	BEING CONSIDERED	YES: UNRESTRICTED NO	INDUSTRIAL MILITARY	
NAME John and STREET & NUMBER Route 1	William McCabe		· · · ·	
CITY, TOWN			STATE	
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-	OF LEGAL DESCR	RIPTION		
COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS,E	TC. Woodford Count	y Courthouse		
STREET & NUMBER	Main Street			
CITY, TOWN	Versailles		state Kentucky	
REPRESEN	TATION IN EXIST	ING SURVEYS		
TITLE				
	of Historic Sites in Ke	entucky		
DATE 1971		FEDERALST	ATECOUNTYLOCAL	
DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS	Kentucky Heritage Con	nmission		
CITY, TOWN		· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	STATE	······································
Fra	ankfort		Kentucky	



CON	DITION	CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
EXCELLENT XGOOD FAIR	DETERIORATED RUINS UNEXPOSED	XUNALTERED	XORIGINAL SITE MOVED DATE

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Offutt-Cole Tavern is an imposing two-story brick and log structure prominently located on the southwest corner of the intersection of Old Frankfort and Midway-Versailles (U. S. 62) Pikes at Nugents Crossroads. The 20-mile road connecting Lexington with Frankfort dates to the late 18th century and is well-known for the large trees, farms--many with pre-Civil War dry laid stone fences and impressive 19th-century houses--which line the highway, making it one of the most beautiful in Kentucky (see photo 1).

The two-story log section which comprises the north side of the tavern was the first to be built. The exact construction date has not yet been determined, although certain interior features, such as the batten doors, the hand-wrought strap hinges, and the style of the mantels could very well date the structure to c. 1791 and perhaps earlier.

The exterior is partially covered with beaded siding of solid cherry, a characteristic of many first quarter 19th century rural log buildings in central Kentucky. The remainder is covered with a plain weatherboard. The facade is two bays wide with the entrance on the left end with one window to the right; there are two smaller windows on the second floor. The window frames are pegged with six-over-six pane sash. On the north end is a large exterior brick chimney resting on a stone foundation, constructed of a style reminiscent of Virginia with two sets of corbelled shoulders, one at the first floor level, another at the second (see photo 2).

A one-story addition, also log, now containing two rooms and a kitchen, is attached to the rear (see photo 3). It has a small interior chimney on the west end and a shed porch, which also extends over the back door of the brick section. There are two windows on the north side of the ell with an entrance on the south side (see photo 4).

The brick section was constructed in 1802 specifically for use as a tavern. It is flush with the log structure, although the roofline of the brick section is somewhat higher. The brick facade is laid in Flemish bond with the sides and rear laid in common bond (see photos 4 and 5). The second floor window frames are pegged with six-over-six pane sash, and have rounded sills below and accented above with jack arches (see photo 6). The first floor windows, larger with six-over-nine pane sash, are more decorative with an ovolo molded backband around the pegged frames. The doorway was placed at the north end and is enclosed by a very simple frame one-story porch supported by four square posts that extends over to the log wing to cover the other entrance.



1900-	COMMUNICATIONS		POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	OTHER (SPECIFY)
<u>X</u> 1800-1899		EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	PHILOSOPHY	X TRANSPORTATION
<u>X</u> 1700-1799	ART	ENGINEERING	MUSIC	THEATER
1500-1599 1600-1699	AGRICULTURE	ECONOMICS	LITERATURE MILITARY	SCULPTURE SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
1400-1499	ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	CONSERVATION	LAW	SCIENCE
PREHISTORIC	ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	COMMUNITY PLANNING	LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	RELIGION

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Offutt-Cole Tavern, located at Nugents Crossroads in rural Woodford County, Kentucky, has a fascinating early history as an inn and stagecoach stop on the Old Frankfort Pike, an important early road connecting the state's capital with the central Bluegrass town of Lexington, once known as the "Athens of the West." Later, when the Versailles-Midway turnpike was constructed in the mid-1800s, the tavern was used as a tollgate house. One of the more prominent owners of the tavern was Major John Lee, one of the founders of Versailles, legal seat of Woodford County (Railey, p. 196).

The brick structure displays the usual features of a building designed and constructed expressly for use as an inn--the oversize rooms, for example. Most of the early woodwork survives, including unusual walnut mantels and chair railing. Particularly interesting is a moveable partition on the second floor of the brick section that operated by a system of weights and pulleys in the ceiling so that it could be raised to form a ballroom for parties or dancing (Coleman, <u>Historic Kentucky</u>, p. 73). The older log section contains many details that characterize late 18th century construction--strap hinges, board-and-batten doors, and an unusual chimney reminiscent of early Virginia in design.

Woodford, one of the richest of the Bluegrass counties, was created in 1788, four years before Kentucky became a state. The Woodford area was surveyed in the 1770s by Hancock Taylor and his cousins Hancock and Willis Lee for the Ohio Company of Virginia (Perrin, p. 650-657). Among other land purchases, it is thought Taylor acquired the piece of property on which the tavern sits sometime in the early 1770s, property which descended to Willis Lee when Taylor was killed by Indians in 1774. Upon Willis Lee's death in 1776, also at the hands of Indians, his brother Hancock inherited the property.

Hancock Lee is well-known throughout the Bluegrass and is credited with founding Leestown, the earliest settlement in Franklin County, now encompassed within the city limits of

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## **10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY  $1/2 \ acre$ UTM REFERENCES

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VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE		
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE		
FORM PREPARED BY	· · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	<u></u>			
NAME / TITLE					
Gloria Mills, Historian/Ja	ames W. Same	es III			
ORGANIZATION	<u></u>	·· <u>···································</u>	DATE		
Kentucky Heritage Commis	ssion		December 1976		
STREET & NUMBER			TELEPHONE		
104 Bridge Street/Route 1			(502) 564/3741		
CITY OR TOWN			STATE		
Frankfort/versailles	Frankfort/Versailles Kentucky				
STATE HISTORIC PRI	ESERVATIO	N OFFICER	CERTIFICATION		
- THE EVALUATEI	D SIGNIFICANCE O	F THIS PROPERTY W	ITHIN THE STATE IS:		
NATIONAL	STA	TE	LOCAL		
_			ervation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I		
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STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER	SIGNATURE	Leed U	. Thum		
TITLE State Historic Pres	ervation Office	er	DATE 3/31/17		
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I HEREBY CERTIFY THAT THIS PROP	PERTY IS INCLUDE	D IN THE NATIONAL I	REGISTER		
$P_{1} \neq R_{2} =$	H:,		- DATE 11/23/77		
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Offutt-Cole Tavern ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2 CONTINUATION SHEET

The south end of the brick block has a flush chimney. The north side has three bays at each story, with the windows identical to those on the front.

The interior layout of the first floor of the brick section was determined by its function as a tavern. It has a narrow hall at the entrance with one large room to the left which accomodated the inn's many guests. An open string staircase is to the immediate right of the entrance with simple bracketted step ends (see photo 7). Chair railing is present in the hall, as it is in all the rooms. Behind the stairway is a small door that leads to the log section. At the rear of the hall is a back door.

Fortunately much of the original woodwork in the first floor room remains intact. On the south wall is a large mantel with end pilasters supporting frieze and cornice and topped with a bowed mantel shelf (see photo 8). A built-in cupboard is to the right of the mantel fireplace with a long two-paneled double door at the top and a smaller one-panel door at the bottom. To the left of the mantel is a small alcove complete with chair railing.

The stairway, with beaded board paneling along the sides, leads to a small back hall with two rooms fronting the east side of the house separated by a thin partition (see photo 11), the partition is attached to the ceiling at the top with hinges that conces permitted the wall to be lifted up to form a ballroom for parties and dancing (see A doorway has been cut in the wall, giving direct access into the two photo 10). rooms. It is presently boarded three-fourths of the way up. The west room is the larger and has a mantel on the far west wall plainer than that on the first floor, but has two built-in cupboards, one on each side, which are identical to the one on the first floor (see photo 11).

The log portion contains one large room on the first floor, with a board-and-batten front door with iron strap hinges (see photo 12). On the south wall is a door leading to the brick block and, to the left, a door leading to an enclosed staircase (see photo 13). On the north wall is an original mantel with corbel supports for the shelf above (see photo 14). The rosettes in the trim are repeated in the curved band design in the mantel on the second floor, north wall (see photo 15).

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

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Offutt-Cole Tavern				
CONTINUATION SHEET	ITEM NUMBER	7	PAGE 3	
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The one-story log addition off the rear of the two-story log structure has been considerably altered, and has been divided into three rooms, one of which contains double board-and-batten doors that were taken from the second floor (see photo 16).

The upstairs has one large room with a small sleeping room in an alcove at the back of the stairs.

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

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Offutt-Cole Tavern				
CONTINUATION SHEET	ITEM NUMBER	8	PAGE	2

Frankfort (Jillson, p. 29). In 1791, Hancock's son John moved to Kentucky with his wife Elizabeth Bell, eventually coming to live in the two-story log house now the north section of the Offutt-Cole Tavern. The log structure, therefore, would appear to have been built by John Lee or Hancock Lee.<sup>1</sup>

John Lee took a prominent place in the community by becoming one of the founders of the town of Versailles, county seat of Woodford. According to historian W. E. Railey, he was also "one of the leading spirits in all improvements in the county until his death during the winter of 1801-02." Continued Railey:

Before coming to Kentucky he was a major in the Second Virginia troops. His first wife was a Virginian; his second wife was a daughter of Captain Thomas Bell of Virginia, whose wife, Elizabeth Taylor, was a daughter of Zachary Taylor, Sr., of Orange County, Virginia, and Elizabeth Lee, his wife; so they were cousins (p. 196).

The children of John and Elizabeth married into some of the most influential families in the state: Sara Lee became the wife of John J. Crittenden, U. S. Senator from Kentucky (1817-19; 1835-41; 1842-48; 1855-61), Attorney General of the United States under Presidents William Henry Harrison (1841) and Millard Fillmore (1852-53), and Governor of Kentucky (1848-50).

<sup>1</sup>Local historian James Sames, who has done considerable research on the tavern, believes the log section served as the station camp, or headquarters, for Taylor and his cousins Willis and Hancock Lee during their survey of Woodford County in the early 1770s. However, his assertion cannot, as yet, be proved conclusively.

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

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<u>Offutt-Cole Tavern</u>				
CONTINUATION SHEET	ITEM NUMBER	8	PAGE	3

In 1802 the house was leased to Horatio J. Offutt, with the provision that Offutt construct a brick section approximately 20 x 28 feet which was attached to the log structure. Two years later the lot and dwelling were rented for a period of three years to John Kennedy and William Dailey, both residents of Lexington and partners in a coach line which formerly ran from Lexington north to Olympian Springs. Kennedy decided to extend his service, took Dailey as a partner, and established another line in a different direction.

To secure the services of a stagecoach stop between Lexington and Frankfort, Kennedy and Dailey made an agreement with Offutt, by which Offutt was to receive Il pounds per year, providing he "put the said dwelling house and kitchen in good repair and to erect a log stable 24 feet by 20 feet and finish it with stalls for eight horses" (Colemen, <u>Stage-Coach Days</u>, p. 34). The stage proprietors reserved the right to cancel the lease if "the seat of government should be moved from Frankfort before the expiration of the said time of three years" (<u>Ibid.</u>, p. 34).

By the summer of 1807, William Dailey had taken over management of the tavern, as revealed in the journal of Fortesque Cuming, an Englishman who passed through the area during the summer of 1807 and stopped at the inn. Wrote Cuming of his journey from Lexington to Frankfort:

After crossing the Town branch, Wolfe's fork, Steele's run, and the South branch of Elkhorn river, to which the three former are auxilaries, and on all of which are several mills, we arrived at a hamlet of three or four houses called Leesburgh, twelve miles from Lexington. One of the houses had been

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

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Offutt-Cole Tavern				
CONTINUATION SHEET	ITEM NUMBER	8	PAGE	4

the seat of the late Col. Lee, and is still owned by his widow, who rents it to a mulatto man named Daly <u>sic</u>, who has converted it into an excellent inn. With the house, Daly occupies as much cultivated land as nearly supplies his well frequented stables with hay, corn and oats. There is also a good kitchen garden in which are vast quantities of culinary sweet herbs, besides useful vegetables, and he has good stabling and other out offices--for all which he pays only forty pounds Virginia currency, or one hundred and thirty-six dollars and two thirds, per annum. We experienced the benefit of his spacious icehouse, in the fine butter we had at supper, where everything was good, particularly the coffee, which was almost a la Francaise. Daly having a good violin, on which he plays by ear with some taste, he entertained us with music while we supped, in return for which, we played for him afterwards some duets, by the aid of another violin, borrowed of young Mr. Lee, who resides in the neighbourhood with his mother (Thwaites, p. 190).

On the return trip from Frankfort to Lexington, Cuming chose another road and came upon the tavern owned by Richard Cole, Sr. (c. 1779-1814). His tavern, known as Cole's Bad Inn, had a somewhat dubious reputation, as revealed in Cuming's comparison of the establishments run by Cole and Daily:

Quitting Frankfort we took a different route to that by which we had come, which brought us, after riding ten miles mostly through woods, to Cole's, who keeps an inn on this road, in opposition to Daly, on the other. But any traveller, who has once contrasted his rough vulgarity, and the badness of his table and accommodations, with the taste, order, plenty, and good attendance of his mulatto competitor, will never trouble Mr. Coles a second time, especially as there is no sensible difference in the length of goodness of the roads, and that by Daly's, is through a generally much better settled country (Ibid., p. 195).

Cole's Bad Inn burned during the winter of 1811. The following year Cole's son, Richard Cole, Jr., bought his father's former competition on Old Frankfort

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

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DATE ENTERED

Offutt-Cole Tavern				
CONTINUATION SHEET	ITEM NUMBER	8	PAGE 5	

Pike, the Offutt Inn, which then came to be called Cole's Tavern.<sup>2</sup> The location on early maps is labeled Leesburg and was, at one time it seems, a small community. It has since disappeared, with little left as a reminder, save the tavern.

Richard Cole, Jr. (1763-1839) was born in Pennsylvania and died in Woodford County "one of the county's wealthiest men." When the county was first organized he was made a constable, but, according to county historian Railey was never in any sense an office seeker" (Railey, <u>History</u>, p. 66). His son James was the father of Zerelda Cole (1825-1911), mother of outlaws Frank and Jesse James. Following James Cole's death shortly after the birth of Zerelda, his wife Sallie is said to have lived with her father-in-law Richard Cole, Jr., until his death in 1839. Sallie then remarried and went with her new husband to Missouri. Zerelda remained behind with an uncle who lived in Scott County, Kentucky. Here she met and married Robert Sallee James from Logan County, Kentucky, a junior at Georgetown College. They eventually settled in Missouri where their four children were born, including Alexander Franklin (Frank) (1844-1915) and Jesse Woodson (1847-1882) (Beamis, p. 10, 58-59).

From about 1848 to 1880, Cole's Tavern was used as a tollgate house. Private turnpike companies were incorporated from approximately 1817 to the 1850s ''for the purpose of forming artificial roads.'' Tollgates, or tollhouses were set up every five miles on all privately owned turnpikes where the toll fees were collected. The tollhouse was bought by the road company and leased to the toll keeper, who was permitted to keep all the money he collected (Coleman, <u>Stage Coach Days</u>, pp. 232, 238).

The route between Versailles and Midway was constructed in the 1840s by the Versailles-Midway Turnpike Co., who purchased Cole's tavern in 1848 and established it as a tollgate house. The company retained ownership until 1865 when it was re-incorporated as the Lexington, Versailles, Midway Road company, who owned the house until the late 1800s, when it was sold to Frank Harper. In 1916 it was bought by John McCabe and is presently owned by his son. It has recently been donated by Mr. McCabe to the Woodford County Historical Society.

 $^2$ At one time Cole also called his inn Black Horse Tavern.

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

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Offutt-Cole Tavern

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

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Additional information provided by Mr. James Cogar, former curator of Colonial Williamsburg and Executive Director of Shakertown at Pleasant Hill, Kentucky.