

KENTUCKY HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

80001633  
JF-434

1. Historic Name (s) Maghera Glass/Ormsby Hall		22. ADD/County Jefferson/Jefferson	
Original Owner Stephen Ormsby		23. Zoning Classification Magisterial District	
Present Name Walden School		24. U.S.G. S. Quadrant (15'/75') Anchorage	
3. Owner's Name Kentucky Military Institute		25. UTM Reference 1 6 6 2 28 0 0 4 23 6 76 0	
4. Owner's Address 8521 Lagrange Road, Lyndon, Ky. 40222		Zone Easting Northing	
5. Location 8521 Lagrange Road, Lyndon, Ky.		26. Prehistoric Site Historic Site Building X	
6. Open to Public Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No		27. District Name:	
7. Visible from road Yes No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		Yes No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
8. Ownership Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Local State Federal		28. Significance Evaluation	
9. Local Contact/Organization Jefferson County Office of Historic Preservation		29. Status National Landmark National Register Landmark Certificate Kentucky Survey Local Landmark HABS/HAER	
10. Site Plan with North Arrow B 21 L8		Date	
Perimeter/building		11. Architect Unknown	
		12. Builder Unknown	
		13. Date Ca. 1830-1831	
		14. Style Georgian/ Greek Revival <input type="checkbox"/>	
		15. Original Use Residence	
		16. Present Use School	
		17. Condition <input type="checkbox"/> Interior Fair Exterior Fair	
18. Description The original portion of Ormsby Hall is a large, two-story, double-pile structure of brick with a five-bay facade. The monumental portico with four Doric columns, pilasters and a pedimented roof was added about 1900. The exterior walls were stuccoed and scored to resemble stone about 1920. The center halls on both stories are 15 feet wide and rooms are 22 by 22 (SEE NEXT PAGE)		30. Theme Primary Exploration/Settle- Secondary ment Other Education	
19. History Judge Stephen Ormsby, a native of Ireland came to Danville, Kentucky from Philadelphia about 1784. He practiced law in Danville and then came to Louisville about 1791 when he was appointed Judge of the Jefferson District Court. He acquired land on Goose Creek in 1803 and apparently built a stone house. It no longer exists. He served in Congress (SEE NEXT PAGE)		31. Endangered Yes No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
20. Significance Ormsby Hall was the country estate of a family prominent in the early years of Jefferson County's development. It later housed a military school which was outstanding in the educational field in Kentucky for over 100 years.		32. ATTACH PHOTO	
21. Source of Information Jefferson County (KY) Deed Books and Will Books.		Roll No. _____ Picture No. _____ Direction _____	
JUL 1 1980 (SEE NEXT PAGE)		33. Tape No. _____ Negative No. _____	
		34. Prepared by: Mary Jean Kinsman Researcher	
		35. Organization Jefferson County Office of Historic Preservation	
		36. Date 29 September 1979	
		37. Revision Dates 38. Staff Review	

18. continued

feet square. The stairway rises steeply to the second floor and faces the rear door. Both front and rear doorways have narrow, three-pane sidelights and divided transoms. Oral tradition states that the present front of the house was originally the rear, however twentieth-century additions make it impossible to determine if the present rear was the original front of the house. Woodwork throughout the house is large-scale, but in a simple, unrefined style. Wide baseboards have a panel motif which is repeated in panels beneath the windows and the canted reveals. Several black marble mantels remain in the former parlors. A 2½ story wing was added to the east end of the house in this century.

19. continued

from 1811 to 1817 and is said to have retired to his estate near Louisville which he named "Maghera Glass," Gaelic meaning green meadows. His only child, Stephen Ormsby, Jr., was born on the estate about 1804.

According to oral tradition Judge Ormsby intended to build the present Ormsby Hall mansion, but because he had heard of an old superstition that a man over 50 who builds a new home would never live to enjoy it, he charged his son with building the house. In 1830 he gave title to the 800 acre Maghera Glass estate to his son and in 1831 the son, Stephen Jr., married Martha Sherley. They had 11 children, all born at Maghera Glass. Judge Ormsby died there in 1844. Stephen Ormsby, Jr. was a major and later colonel of the Louisville Legion which saw service in the Mexican War. Colonel Ormsby died at the estate in 1869.

In 1896 part of the estate and the house were purchased by the Kentucky Military Institute which had been established near Frankfort, Kentucky in 1845. In its early years the school had both a preparatory school and a college division. The school closed from 1861 until September, 1865 because every cadet and most faculty members fought in the Civil War. Five Union generals and two Confederate generals were former K.M.I. Cadets, including Confederate General John Hunt Morgan. After moving to the Ormsby estate the school flourished and a number of buildings were erected on the campus. Most of these no longer exist. A unique feature of the K.M.I. program was moving the students and faculty to the Gulf Coast of Florida for the winter months each year. K.M.I. was closed in the early 1970s and Ormsby Hall was vacant until leased by the Walden School in 1975.

21. continued

Bullitt, Neville, Old Homes and Landmarks of Louisville and Jefferson County, Vol. I.  
Information from Mrs. Charles S. Blakely, Louisville, Kentucky.  
Information from Kentucky Military Institute Records, undated.