

PH0353710

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY	
RECEIVED	DEC 9 1975
DATE ENTERED	CGT C 1976

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

**\*\*Wright, Captain James, House and Cabin**

AND/OR COMMON

Roccligan (Ardery House); Hopewell

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

1 mile west of Paris on the Maysville-Lexington Road usa 27/68

CITY, TOWN

Paris

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

06

STATE

Kentucky

CODE

021

COUNTY

Bourbon

CODE

017

**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	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Chester Grimes

STREET & NUMBER

Maysville-Lexington Road

CITY, TOWN

Paris

VICINITY OF

STATE

Kentucky

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Bourbon County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Paris

STATE

Kentucky

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky

DATE

1971

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		

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

The brick house built by Captain James Wright about 1791 overlooking Houston Creek to the southeast and the Paris-Lexington highroad to the west bears many signs of its early construction date. Although most of the interior woodwork has been removed through the years (some recently), the basic structure is almost intact. The house has a hall-and-parlor plan, symmetrical in layout but asymmetrical in elevation. The two rooms downstairs and two upstairs are all approximately the same size, rather long and narrow, not square. They are divided by a brick partition that runs from the basement up through the second story (rather than the frame partition found in many early houses with similar proportions).

Originally the south room -- the house faces approximately east and west -- had front and back entrances opposite each other adjacent to the center partition. The back (east) door frame, with fairly wide-splayed header-and-stretcher brick jack arch remains; slightly less than half of the front arch survives embedded in later brick infill. There was a window at the east and west end of each of the four rooms; because the doors were off-center to accommodate the central partition, the facades were asymmetrical, a feature usually overcome in favor of Georgian or Federal exterior symmetry after the first stage of settlement.

The foundations of the house are of local stone. The walls on all sides appear to have been Flemish bond with queen closers, not only at the corners, but also at the sides of all or most of the openings, although the gable ends above the second-story ceiling are in common bond. The chimneys centered on the ends are also brick. That this change in bonding is original is indicated by the south gable end, which remains intact (and unpainted) within the attic of the new (1824) wing. Not only does this confirm the use of common bond, but it also has preserved an extremely rare instance of early ~~white-lining~~ white-lining: lines of white paint or lime rather casually applied to emphasize and sharpen the outline of the mortar joints, both vertical and horizontal. The unaltered south chimney within the attic also confirms a suspicion that the north chimney has been narrowed at some point, perhaps at both the second-story shoulder and above the roof-ridge.

The interior of the 1791 brick house has blue ash floors of wide random-width boards. The basement has old brick laid in a herringbone pattern in one room (the other has been sealed with a concrete floor). An odd fireplace opening is set at an angle at the base of the north chimney in the basement. There was chair-railing throughout (recently removed), at least two plain shelf-and-frame mantels (also removed, although one survives in storage; see photo 3, lower left), probably walnut doors with very primitive hammered or wrought-iron strap hinges extending almost the full width of the doors at top and bottom, and box locks (it is possible that some or most of the hardware was collected by Mrs. Ardery from elsewhere and installed in the older part of the house; see photo 3, lower right). There is a closed stair in the north-west corner of the basement and first story, although a pull-up staircase located

(continued)

## 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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" 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				

Cabin 1786;

house

SPECIFIC DATES 1792; 1825; portico ca. 1938 BUILDER/ARCHITECT James Wright; James Wright, Jr.

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Located on a conspicuous site just southwest of Paris on the Lexington Pike (the old Maysville-Nashville Road) at the crossing of Houston Creek, the Wright house is a familiar landmark to travellers on that famous road. The major block of the house consists of two early portions, one brick and one frame, linked by a modern portico.

The brick portion of the house was built in 1791 by Captain James Wright, a Revolutionary War soldier and early settler of Bourbon County. The frame addition was added in 1825 by his son, James Wright, Jr., who served in the War of 1812. Behind the main house still stands Captain Wright's pioneer log cabin, built about 1786. The property has also been the residence of Robert Adair, a gentlemen farmer, and Judge and Mrs. W.B. Ardery, who were both active in State politics. Mrs. Ardery was herself a writer on Kentucky history and an ardent preservationist, not only of "Roccligan," as she and her husband called the Wright place while they owned it, but also of the renowned Duncan Tavern in Paris, a pioneer Kentucky house nuseum (listed on the National Register April 11, 1972).

James Wright, Sr., was born in 1754 in Botetourt County, Virginia. A Captain during the Revolutionary War, he was also one of the original members of the Society of the Cincinnati. The society, named after Cincinnatus, the Roman soldier who returned to farming after successfully defending Rome, was formed in 1783 by Revolutionary war officers. General George Washington served as the first president. The organization was formed to perpetuate friendships made during the war and to provide care for widows and orphans. Descendants of the officers were included in its membership. When the society was first organized it was criticized by those who feared it might become the nucleus of an aristocracy.

For his services in the war, Wright received a thousand-acre land grant on Houston Creek in what is now Bourbon County. In February 1776 he married Martha Hamilton, daughter of Colonel Andrew Hamilton. Wright came to Kentucky and erected a log house about 1786. (The original cabin has been restored and is located a hundred yards southeast of the house.) Here he and his family lived while he built the brick portion of the main house. Wright also constructed of log one of the first grist and saw mills in the area, a short distance from the house on Houston Creek.

At the death of Captain Wright in 1825 his son James, a veteran of the War of 1812, inherited the property and built the frame addition onto the house. He also continued

(continued)

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

The Courier-Journal (Louisville). July 8, 1956.

Hurwitz, Howard L. "Society of the Cincinnati," An Encyclopedic Dictionary of American History. New York: Washington Square Press, 1970.

In Kentucky Magazine. Winter Issue, 1943.

Information from research by Mrs. W.B. Ardery, Mrs. Wade H. Whitley, Mr. Chester Grimes.

(continued)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 6	7 3 8 1 9 0	4 2 3 0 2 7 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Mary Cronan, Historian

Walter E. Langsam, Architectural Historian

October 1975

ag

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Kentucky Heritage Commission

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

401 Wapping Street

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Frankfort

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.

FEDERAL REGISTER SIGNATURE

Eldred W. Helton

TITLE

SHPO

DATE

11-25-75

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

10/8/96

AG DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

9/27/76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
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Wright, Captain James, House and Cabin

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7

PAGE 2

on the south side of the central wall was used to give access to the attic or loft. The roof is supported by almost square rafters with horizontal members just above mid-level, mortised into the rafters. Original or early shingles with many small square nails remain under a modern slate roof. The attic is undivided and has wide board flooring. Original pegged window frames remain on the second story; those on the first floor, which had small panes, probably 6-over-9, were recently replaced. Nearly all the plaster walls have been dry-walled or "pine-panelled." Thus, although there is much evidence of early construction and trim, little of the latter remains intact in the older part of the house.

The wing added by James Wright, Jr., about 1825 has apparently fared better (see photos 1 and 2). It extends south of the brick portion with a central hall and two south rooms, now open through a wide arch. The addition has two stories, with a roof matching that of the earlier roof and extending eastward over the rear portion of the addition, which is 8 to 10 feet wider than the original, and just slightly overlaps it at the rear. The addition, on a stone foundation, is of frame construction built, as the owner points out, like a barn with angle braces mortised and pegged into both the vertical and horizontal beams. The wall studs are also mortised into both top and bottom plates. The roof rafters are slightly narrower than those of the older part; like them, they are all marked with Roman numerals, and there are also old shingles under the slate roof. [There is one original square lookout window frame under each gable and a similar beaded frame on a door between the basement rooms in the old wing.]

The interior woodwork of the addition is all cherry (this may include the partial railing of the staircase in the northwest corner of the first floor of the old structure, which is also of cherry and may date to 1825). There are fine panelled cherry doors, a plain cherry stair-railing with baluster-shaped newels with knobs on top, and a curious cherry post in the middle of the upstairs southeast room (which also has the only original closet in the house: under the stairs to the attic in the new wing); it has been suggested that this post was used by the ladies of the family in tightening their stays, or it may have been utilized in drying or storage. The main staircase, otherwise intact, has recently been reversed in order to allow more convenient access to the bathroom located in a modern dormer at the east end of the upper hall. Closets have been added in the upstairs rooms in both the old and the new section. Wide floorboards have been preserved throughout.

There is a handsome original cherry mantel in the southwest parlor, with a deeply framed panel under the shelf and unfluted tapered columns on either side, similar in proportion to the stair newels and upstairs post (see photo 3, top). A modern version of the same mantel has been installed in the south room of the old house.

(continued)

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Wide doors flanked by sidelights open into either end of the 1824 hall, facing east and west. Virtually all the other woodwork in the new wing have similar frames that look like early Greek Revival and seem too late in style for the cherry woodwork (this incongruity cannot be resolved at this point). There are corner blocks of shallow convex cones and large-scale raised bands on the moldings. Since this millwork is consistent throughout the south wing, related in style to the cherry mantel, and different from the much more refined if simple moldings of the old wing, there seems no reason to question its being integral with the date of the addition.

The Arderys, shortly after they bought the place in 1938, added an impressive two-story, three-bay portico of square pillars, unifying the brick and frame portions of the house on the west front and tying the house down visually to the ground that slopes down to the road. It does, of course, give the house the overall appearance of a typical Bluegrass Greek Revival house; the small size of the older openings and the obvious differences in materials, however, immediately belies this first impression.

Apparently the Arderys also replaced the small west window in the southern room of the old wing with a wider triple window; this may have been done earlier, however, as the original front door on that side, now filled in and with half its jack arch replaced, was not needed after the new main entrance in the adjacent hall was added in 1825. There is a modern porch along the east side of the old wing, except where the new wing overlaps a few feet (now the location of a lavatory). The building as a whole has been painted white at least since the 1930s.

About 20 yards southeast of the house is the log house believed to be that erected by Captain James Wright in 1786 for use while constructing the brick house (photos 4, 5, 6). It consists of a single room 22 feet square with a large stone chimney at the east end. Close scrutiny of the structure reveals that it may well have been taken apart and reconstructed on the site at some point in its history.

A number of the logs have notches resembling those for setting in joists along their top or bottom; these logs occur both inside and outside in no determinable pattern. Furthermore at least half-a-dozen logs have been spliced, either diagonally or in dogleg fashion. The present windows are horizontal slots two logs high in the center of the north and south walls; the only sign of any other opening except the single door on the south side is a filled-in square high in the center of the west wall. Until recently there was a frame lean-to up against the west wall, but it appeared not to be particularly old, and the logs protected by the lean-to do not seem to have aged significantly more or less than the exposed ones on the other sides.

(continued)

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ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 4

The interior is floored with packed clay; the ceiling is 10 to 12 feet above the ground and supported by a few large beams; the fireplace opening is far too small to have served as a cooking-heating facility for the whole space; and the mantel is a self-consciously rustic shelf of log segments with the bark on (see photo 6, lower left). Thus it seems as though the whole structure was rebuilt as a playhouse, probably sometime in the 20th century and no doubt utilizing a considerable portion of the surviving original logs.

An old stone wall of the "slave fence" type surrounds the house on three sides, with the suggestion of a stone stile remaining on the south. There are a number of nearby out-buildings, including a board-and-batten smokehouse north of the house (see photo 5), several barn structures and sheds or garages to the east. These contribute to the sense of a 19th century functional complex, although none of them is known to have historical or architectural significance. Virtually nothing remains of the mill site on Houston Creek, although it might be susceptible to archeological investigation.

(The house actually faces northwest and southeast, referred above as west and east, respectively.)

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Wright, Captain James, House and Cabin

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

to operate the mill and replaced the log grist and saw mill with one of stone that was three stories high.

In 1854 the house and mill were sold to Wright's neighbor, Robert Langston. Langston, a son of an early settler, was born in Bourbon County in 1807. On the property he purchased from the Wright family, Langston operated a large distillery and carried on a walnut lumber trade. In the division of his estate in 1882 the Wright house was left to his daughter, Eliza Langston DeJarnett. R. Langston and R. DeJarnett are listed as the owners of the property on the 1877 Atlas. At that time, the property appears as still located just beyond the toll houses that ring the town.

Ten years later the house was sold to Robert Adair. Adair was born in Nicholas County, Kentucky, in 1839. As a young man Adair operated a jewelry business in Maysville, Kentucky. In 1861 Adair and his wife, Bell Dodson of Maysville, moved to Bourbon County. Thirty-one years later Adair purchased the Wright house and lived there until his death in 1907. He devoted his last years to farming and stock raising.

Adair's grandson, William Breckinridge Ardery, purchased the place in 1938. Judge Ardery married Julia Spencer, daughter of the Reverend I.J. Spencer of Lexington, Kentucky. Judge Ardery served as Bourbon County representative in the State legislature, as the Commonwealth Attorney for his Circuit Court District, and as the presiding Judge of the Bourbon County District Court. His wife, Mrs. Julia Ardery, was named national committeewoman from Kentucky at the State Democratic convention in 1956. In 1942 she was appointed by Kentucky's Governor Keen Johnson, to serve on the commission to arrange the sesquicentennial celebration for the Commonwealth of Kentucky. She played an active role in the preservation and adaptation of Duncan Tavern in Paris by the Kentucky Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Mrs. Ardery also wrote several books on subjects dealing with Kentucky's history. Although the restoration of the tavern and adjacent buildings followed a preservation philosophy now somewhat outdated (like the Ardery's addition of a grandiose portico to unify the two disparate portions of the house they renamed "Roccligan"), it was a pioneering effort in the belated struggle for historic preservation in Kentucky.



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Captain James Wright House and Cabin

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PAGE 3

The Wright House and Cabin together represent a fine example of the evolution of an early settler's residence. The pioneer log house, although much altered, still suggests the material, scale, and location of the initial construction phase in the virtual wilderness. The original asymmetrical brick portion of the main house followed the frequently used early hall-and-parlor plan. As the architectural styles changed and the size of the family increased, the two-story asymmetrical Greek Revival block was added to the original portion. Even the 20th-century additions and alterations reflect a changing concept of history and architecture--already obsolete, perhaps, but no less informative for that.

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PAGE 2

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<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
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<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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input checked="" 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				

Cabin 1786;

house

SPECIFIC DATES 1792; 1825; portico ca. 1938 BUILDER/ARCHITECT James Wright; James Wright, Jr.

### STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Located on a conspicuous site just southwest of Paris on the Lexington Pike (the old Maysville-Nashville Road) at the crossing of Houston Creek, the Wright house is a familiar landmark to travellers on that famous road. The major block of the house consists of two early portions, one brick and one frame, linked by a modern portico.

The brick portion of the house was built in 1791 by Captain James Wright, a Revolutionary War soldier and early settler of Bourbon County. The frame addition was added in 1825 by his son, James Wright, Jr., who served in the War of 1812. Behind the main house still stands Captain Wright's pioneer log cabin, built about 1786. The property has also been the residence of Robert Adair, a gentlemen farmer, and Judge and Mrs. W.B. Ardery, who were both active in State politics. Mrs. Ardery was herself a writer on Kentucky history and an ardent preservationist, not only of "Roccligan," as she and her husband called the Wright place while they owned it, but also of the renowned Duncan Tavern in Paris, a pioneer Kentucky house nuseum (listed on the National Register April 11, 1972).

James Wright, Sr., was born in 1754 in Botetourt County, Virginia. A Captain during the Revolutionary War, he was also one of the original members of the Society of the Cincinnati. The society, named after Cincinnatus, the Roman soldier who returned to farming after successfully defending Rome, was formed in 1783 by Revolutionary war officers. General George Washington served as the first president. The organization was formed to perpetuate friendships made during the war and to provide care for widows and orphans. Descendants of the officers were included in its membership. When the society was first organized it was criticized by those who feared it might become the nucleus of an aristocracy.

For his services in the war, Wright received a thousand-acre land grant on Houston Creek in what is now Bourbon County. In February 1776 he married Martha Hamilton, daughter of Colonel Andrew Hamilton. Wright came to Kentucky and erected a log house about 1786. (The original cabin has been restored and is located a hundred yards southeast of the house.) Here he and his family lived while he built the brick portion of the main house. Wright also constructed of log one of the first grist and saw mills in the area, a short distance from the house on Houston Creek.

At the death of Captain Wright in 1825 his son James, a veteran of the War of 1812, inherited the property and built the frame addition onto the house. He also continued

(continued)

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

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(continued)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 6	7 3 8 1 9 0	4 2 3 0 2 7 0	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE Mary Cronan, Historian

Walter E. Langsam, Architectural Historian

October 1975

ag

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Kentucky Heritage Commission

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

401 Wapping Street

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Frankfort

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.

FEDERAL REGISTER SIGNATURE

Eldred W. Helton

TITLE

SHPO

DATE

11-25-75

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DATE

10/8/96

AG DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

DATE

9/27/76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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on the south side of the central wall was used to give access to the attic or loft. The roof is supported by almost square rafters with horizontal members just above mid-level, mortised into the rafters. Original or early shingles with many small square nails remain under a modern slate roof. The attic is undivided and has wide board flooring. Original pegged window frames remain on the second story; those on the first floor, which had small panes, probably 6-over-9, were recently replaced. Nearly all the plaster walls have been dry-walled or "pine-panelled." Thus, although there is much evidence of early construction and trim, little of the latter remains intact in the older part of the house.

The wing added by James Wright, Jr., about 1825 has apparently fared better (see photos 1 and 2). It extends south of the brick portion with a central hall and two south rooms, now open through a wide arch. The addition has two stories, with a roof matching that of the earlier roof and extending eastward over the rear portion of the addition, which is 8 to 10 feet wider than the original, and just slightly overlaps it at the rear. The addition, on a stone foundation, is of frame construction built, as the owner points out, like a barn with angle braces mortised and pegged into both the vertical and horizontal beams. The wall studs are also mortised into both top and bottom plates. The roof rafters are slightly narrower than those of the older part; like them, they are all marked with Roman numerals, and there are also old shingles under the slate roof. [There is one original square lookout window frame under each gable and a similar beaded frame on a door between the basement rooms in the old wing.]

The interior woodwork of the addition is all cherry (this may include the partial railing of the staircase in the northwest corner of the first floor of the old structure, which is also of cherry and may date to 1825). There are fine panelled cherry doors, a plain cherry stair-railing with baluster-shaped newels with knobs on top, and a curious cherry post in the middle of the upstairs southeast room (which also has the only original closet in the house: under the stairs to the attic in the new wing); it has been suggested that this post was used by the ladies of the family in tightening their stays, or it may have been utilized in drying or storage. The main staircase, otherwise intact, has recently been reversed in order to allow more convenient access to the bathroom located in a modern dormer at the east end of the upper hall. Closets have been added in the upstairs rooms in both the old and the new section. Wide floorboards have been preserved throughout.

There is a handsome original cherry mantel in the southwest parlor, with a deeply framed panel under the shelf and unfluted tapered columns on either side, similar in proportion to the stair newels and upstairs post (see photo 3, top). A modern version of the same mantel has been installed in the south room of the old house.

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Wide doors flanked by sidelights open into either end of the 1824 hall, facing east and west. Virtually all the other woodwork in the new wing have similar frames that look like early Greek Revival and seem too late in style for the cherry woodwork (this incongruity cannot be resolved at this point). There are corner blocks of shallow convex cones and large-scale raised bands on the moldings. Since this millwork is consistent throughout the south wing, related in style to the cherry mantel, and different from the much more refined if simple moldings of the old wing, there seems no reason to question its being integral with the date of the addition.

The Arderys, shortly after they bought the place in 1938, added an impressive two-story, three-bay portico of square pillars, unifying the brick and frame portions of the house on the west front and tying the house down visually to the ground that slopes down to the road. It does, of course, give the house the overall appearance of a typical Bluegrass Greek Revival house; the small size of the older openings and the obvious differences in materials, however, immediately belies this first impression.

Apparently the Arderys also replaced the small west window in the southern room of the old wing with a wider triple window; this may have been done earlier, however, as the original front door on that side, now filled in and with half its jack arch replaced, was not needed after the new main entrance in the adjacent hall was added in 1825. There is a modern porch along the east side of the old wing, except where the new wing overlaps a few feet (now the location of a lavatory). The building as a whole has been painted white at least since the 1930s.

About 20 yards southeast of the house is the log house believed to be that erected by Captain James Wright in 1786 for use while constructing the brick house (photos 4, 5, 6). It consists of a single room 22 feet square with a large stone chimney at the east end. Close scrutiny of the structure reveals that it may well have been taken apart and reconstructed on the site at some point in its history.

A number of the logs have notches resembling those for setting in joists along their top or bottom; these logs occur both inside and outside in no determinable pattern. Furthermore at least half-a-dozen logs have been spliced, either diagonally or in dogleg fashion. The present windows are horizontal slots two logs high in the center of the north and south walls; the only sign of any other opening except the single door on the south side is a filled-in square high in the center of the west wall. Until recently there was a frame lean-to up against the west wall, but it appeared not to be particularly old, and the logs protected by the lean-to do not seem to have aged significantly more or less than the exposed ones on the other sides.

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The interior is floored with packed clay; the ceiling is 10 to 12 feet above the ground and supported by a few large beams; the fireplace opening is far too small to have served as a cooking-heating facility for the whole space; and the mantel is a self-consciously rustic shelf of log segments with the bark on (see photo 6, lower left). Thus it seems as though the whole structure was rebuilt as a playhouse, probably sometime in the 20th century and no doubt utilizing a considerable portion of the surviving original logs.

An old stone wall of the "slave fence" type surrounds the house on three sides, with the suggestion of a stone stile remaining on the south. There are a number of nearby out-buildings, including a board-and-batten smokehouse north of the house (see photo 5), several barn structures and sheds or garages to the east. These contribute to the sense of a 19th century functional complex, although none of them is known to have historical or architectural significance. Virtually nothing remains of the mill site on Houston Creek, although it might be susceptible to archeological investigation.

(The house actually faces northwest and southeast, referred above as west and east, respectively.)

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to operate the mill and replaced the log grist and saw mill with one of stone that was three stories high.

In 1854 the house and mill were sold to Wright's neighbor, Robert Langston. Langston, a son of an early settler, was born in Bourbon County in 1807. On the property he purchased from the Wright family, Langston operated a large distillery and carried on a walnut lumber trade. In the division of his estate in 1882 the Wright house was left to his daughter, Eliza Langston DeJarnett. R. Langston and R. DeJarnett are listed as the owners of the property on the 1877 Atlas. At that time, the property appears as still located just beyond the toll houses that ring the town.

Ten years later the house was sold to Robert Adair. Adair was born in Nicholas County, Kentucky, in 1839. As a young man Adair operated a jewelry business in Maysville, Kentucky. In 1861 Adair and his wife, Bell Dodson of Maysville, moved to Bourbon County. Thirty-one years later Adair purchased the Wright house and lived there until his death in 1907. He devoted his last years to farming and stock raising.

Adair's grandson, William Breckinridge Ardery, purchased the place in 1938. Judge Ardery married Julia Spencer, daughter of the Reverend I.J. Spencer of Lexington, Kentucky. Judge Ardery served as Bourbon County representative in the State legislature, as the Commonwealth Attorney for his Circuit Court District, and as the presiding Judge of the Bourbon County District Court. His wife, Mrs. Julia Ardery, was named national committeewoman from Kentucky at the State Democratic convention in 1956. In 1942 she was appointed by Kentucky's Governor Keen Johnson, to serve on the commission to arrange the sesquicentennial celebration for the Commonwealth of Kentucky. She played an active role in the preservation and adaptation of Duncan Tavern in Paris by the Kentucky Society of the Daughters of the American Revolution. Mrs. Ardery also wrote several books on subjects dealing with Kentucky's history. Although the restoration of the tavern and adjacent buildings followed a preservation philosophy now somewhat outdated (like the Ardery's addition of a grandiose portico to unify the two disparate portions of the house they renamed "Roccligan"), it was a pioneering effort in the belated struggle for historic preservation in Kentucky.

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The Wright House and Cabin together represent a fine example of the evolution of an early settler's residence. The pioneer log house, although much altered, still suggests the material, scale, and location of the initial construction phase in the virtual wilderness. The original asymmetrical brick portion of the main house followed the frequently used early hall-and-parlor plan. As the architectural styles changed and the size of the family increased, the two-story asymmetrical Greek Revival block was added to the original portion. Even the 20th-century additions and alterations reflect a changing concept of history and architecture--already obsolete, perhaps, but no less informative for that.

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