

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAY 10 1976

DATE ENTERED OCT 18 1976

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES  
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORMSEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*  
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

\*\* Chittenden P. Lyon, Jr., House (Professor Hanson Boring's Private School)

AND/OR COMMON

Casner House ("Old Ship")

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

304 Union Street

-- NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

Madisonville

-- VICINITY OF

STATE

CODE  
021

COUNTY

Hopkins

CODE

107

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

## CATEGORY

 DISTRICT BUILDING(S) STRUCTURE SITE OBJECT

## OWNERSHIP

 PUBLIC PRIVATE BOTH

## PUBLIC ACQUISITION

 IN PROCESS BEING CONSIDERED

## STATUS

 OCCUPIED UNOCCUPIED WORK IN PROGRESS

## ACCESSIBLE

 YES: RESTRICTED YES: UNRESTRICTED NO

## PRESENT USE

 AGRICULTURE COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL ENTERTAINMENT GOVERNMENT INDUSTRIAL MILITARY MUSEUM PARK PRIVATE RESIDENCE RELIGIOUS SCIENTIFIC TRANSPORTATION OTHER:**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mrs. Lawrence (Armintha Bowmer) Casner

STREET &amp; NUMBER

304 Union Street

CITY, TOWN

Madisonville

-- VICINITY OF

STATE

Kentucky

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Hopkins County Courthouse

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Madisonville

STATE

Kentucky

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky

DATE

1974

 FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCALDEPOSITORY 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		

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

The Lyon house is situated several blocks from the courthouse square of Madisonville, at the far end of a street that contains a number of impressive residences that span over a century of construction. Set fairly near the street, the main part of the house is an amply-scaled two-story five-bay brick block, facing west (photos 1, 4). A small kitchen wing with former smokehouse projects off one side of the rear (photo 4). The hipped roof contributes to the compactness of the main block.

Except for the central entrance, the major openings are all very long, regularly-spaced windows with hoodmolds suggesting shallow pediments with a residual Greek Revival flavor. The gracefully bracketted cornice, however, evokes the mid-century Italianate vogue. The central bay is considerably wider and allows for an imposing entrance with bracketted entablature (photo 5).

Before 1899 (see photograph 2) a broad three-bay porch supported on Ionic columns was apparently added; it originally had a balustrade at the second-story level. The more modest porch on chamfered posts across the rear of the house appears to be original (photo 3).

The original interior must have been very plain. A central hall is flanked by pairs of rooms on both sides on both floors. The interior window and door frames are an even more austere version of those on the exterior (photo 6). Most of the rest of the woodwork consisted of plain boards, with flooring of 6-inch-wide yellow poplar planks. Mantels, several of which remain upstairs, were also plain.

About the turn of the century the house was brought up-to-date by means of several characteristic and attractive additions. Hardwood floors, some with fine parquet-pattern borders, were installed in the downstairs rooms and continuing into the upstairs central hall, which is wide enough to be used as a sitting room. The main stair was replaced with a handsome oak three-flight staircase with spindled balustrade. The front portion of the hall was divided from the stairhall by a square arch with open latticework (no longer in situ), and there was other golden oak trim.

The right front (southeast) room was made into an elegant reception room, with a mantel and overmirror featuring garlands and swags. The fireplace facing and hearth are of white tile with embossed, hand-painted pink garlands and matching metal grate-frame. The office-study behind has a more masculine mantel-mirror combination of perhaps Neo-Empire inspiration. The left parlor has simpler blue-and-white tile in a white-painted mantel,

(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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
<input 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 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		

SPECIFIC DATES 1857

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Lyon house is one of the earliest surviving and most substantial residences in Madisonville, county seat of coal-rich Hopkins County in western Kentucky. It was built for Chittenden P. Lyon, Jr., scion of a family prominent in the area. Lyon (1829-63), although short-lived, was a prosperous merchant and built this mansion in 1857. From 1879 to 1900 it served as the residence and private school of Professor Hanson Boring and his wife. This school, which is thought to have been conducted at the equivalent of the present high school and junior college level, was probably the only institution of higher learning in Hopkins County at the time, and educationally advanced. Throughout its existence, the house has belonged to citizens who have contributed much to the life and prosperity of the community.

Matthew Lyon (1746-1822), grandfather of the builder of the house, gained national renown in the Revolutionary War and notoriety as the only U.S. Congressman prosecuted under the Alien and Sedition Acts during the administration of President John Adams. Born in Ireland, he came to this shore in 1765, and eventually settled in Vermont, where he rose to State office, founded a mill-town, and edited a newspaper entitled, characteristically, The Scourge of Aristocracy and Repository of Important Political Truth. In 1801 he moved to the Cumberland Valley of western Kentucky with his extended family and 70 artisans and founded the town of Eddyville, not far from what was to become Madisonville.

A large landowner, he was first in the Kentucky legislature and then in Congress 1803-1811, where he was as controversial and stimulating an influence as in all his endeavors. He was also a presidential elector in the 1829 campaign won by Andrew Jackson.

His son, Chittenden, Sr., represented the district in the U.S. Congress from 1827-35; having represented Caldwell County in the Kentucky legislature from 1822-24. He was a grandson on his mother's side of Thomas Chittenden, first governor of Vermont, for whom he was named. He apparently, like others members of the family, was also financially successful and prominent in the area. In 1854, when Lyon County was formed out of the southwestern half of Caldwell County, it was named in his honor. He died in 1842.

(continued)

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Atlas of Hopkins County, Kentucky. Compiled and drawn from actual surveys by William Shanklin and F. E. Morrow, B. C. E. (Atlanta, Ga: W. G. Fish & Co., 1898; reprinted with additional materials, some relating to the Lyon House, as Original Atlas and Historical Data of Hopkins County, Kentucky by the Historical Society of Hopkins County, Inc., 1974).

(continued)

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY less than 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	1 6	4 5 5 <sup>800</sup> 9 0 0	4 1 3 0 7 1 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

Lawrence Casner

WEL;RMP

ORGANIZATION

Historical Society of Hopkins County, Kentucky

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

304 Union Street

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Madisonville

STATE

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

*Cedric W. Melton*

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

5/3/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE

10/18/96

ATTEST

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

10/14/76

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while that of the dining-room beyond is oak, with a violent green tile facing. These features provide visual foci and variety to the rooms and are characteristic of their own period.

Since World War II the present owners have somewhat modernized the interior, simplifying the trim in the entrance and stairhall, and installing central air-conditioning in a compartment within it. Modern plumbing has been installed in kitchen and bathrooms (although one of the latter retains a blue-and-white tile floor), and part of the rear ell has been connected and adapted for modern functional needs. Overall, however, the building retains much of its original and turn-of-the-century features. (Professor Boring and his wife used several rooms as classrooms, but no physical evidence of such use remains.)

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C.P. Lyon, Sr.'s three sons moved to Madisonville when his estate was settled in 1843 and organized a dry-goods firm there. Seven years after the firm was organized in 1847, the firm was prospering. Chittenden P. Lyon, the eldest son of Chittenden, Sr., made plans to construct a large brick home on the southern half of the "Whobrey Lot" which ran from Union to Franklin Street. When construction began four years later in 1857, Lyon was well established in Madisonville's commercial life. He continued in dry-goods merchandising and expanded into general trading, real estate, and money lending. He was a powerful force in the community's financial affairs as a result of his marriage into the prominent Collins family and his commercial and financial acumen.

Unfortunately, Lyon was able to enjoy his spacious mansion for only six years, prior to his death at the age of 34 in 1863, during the Civil War. Lyon's widow Nannie Collins Lyon sold the home to her brother-in-law and sister, Professor Hanson Boring (1825-1905) and Mattie Collins Boring, in 1879. An account of Boring's career appeared among the Biographical Sketches in the 1887 edition of Perrin's History of Kentucky:

Prof. H. Boring, Hopkins County, was born March 10, 1825, in Brooke County, W. Va. He is a son of Eli and Cecilia (Loudenslager) Boring, both natives of what is now Carroll County, Md. The father died in 1851, aged fifty-eight, the mother died in 1878, aged seventy-eight. Prof. Boring was reared in his native county, and in 1846 accidentally lost both arms while assisting with a wheat thresher; after recovering from these wounds he attended Bethany College, West Virginia, presided over by Alexander Campbell, from which he graduated in 1853, sharing first honors with W. B. Smith of Madison County, Ky. In the fall of 1853 he came to Hopkins County and established a female boarding school in Madisonville; he sold out this school in 1860, and during the war taught in Christian and Trigg Counties. In 1867 he entered Eminence College as professor of Mathematics, which position he held until 1873, after which he returned to Madisonville, where he taught a select school ten years; he is now occupying the chair of Mathematics in Eminence College, Kentucky, his residence being in Madisonville. For the past thirty-one years the professor has been engaged in teaching, and is the oldest teacher in Hopkins County, and perhaps one of the oldest in the State, as well as one of the most proficient. He was

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married in 1854 to Mattie Collins, daughter of Elder O. Collins, of Madisonville. He uses artificial arms of his own invention, by means of which he assists himself and manipulates in the school rooms successfully.

Both Professor and Mrs. Boring used the former Lyon residence as a school--the Professor teaching academic courses on the second floor and Mrs. Boring teaching music and piano on the first. Numerous prominent citizens of Madisonville received their training from the Borings who maintained their regionally-renowned school at the Lyon House until 1900. Boring's method of instruction was advanced for the period, as he allowed his students to proceed in their studies as fast as their intellect and industry would permit.

During the twentieth century a series of community leaders have resided in the house. From 1902 to 1904 it belonged to Mrs. Laura A. Pritchett, proprietor of the well-known Hotel Lucille in Madisonville and aunt of Mrs. Mary Laffoon, wife of Kentucky governor Ruby Laffoon. In 1905 the property was purchased by J. F. Dempsey, a prominent local lawyer who was at one time county court judge of Hopkins County. He was also Railroad Commissioner from the Western Kentucky District. Judge Dempsey sold the property in 1922 to Franklin G. Bowmer, a local druggist, a member of whose family still owns the house.

Architecturally, the large brick house has a simplicity of layout and massing that reflects a conservative approach harking back to the earlier period of the 19th century, although a few features suggest the Italianate phase of its mid-19th century date. The interior was attractively remodelled at the turn of the century, and there have been some recent alterations, but the property--which is very well maintained and lies at one end of a street that is lined with some of the older and more impressive residences of Madisonville--still exudes a sense of the respectable affluence of its builder.

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Casner, Lawrence. "Ante Bellum, and an Old Brick House." Kentucky Ancestors, IX, 1 (Frankfort: Kentucky Historical Society, July 1973), pp. 3-6.

Collins, Richard H. History of Kentucky. 2 vols., 1874 .

Perrin, W. H., J. H. Battle, & G. C. Kniffin. Kentucky, A History of the State. Louisville & Chicago: F. A. Battey Publishing Co., 1886.

Hopkins County, Kentucky, Circuit Court Docket No. 9131.