

018 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 NOV 18 1982
date entered

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

1. Name

historic James Lane Allen House

and/or common Scarlett Gate

2. Location

street & number 1020 Lane Allen Road

NA not for publication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 type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" 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 type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <u>N/A</u> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input checked="" 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 Mrs. John Scott Lansill

street & number 1020 Lane Allen Road

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 Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date August 1982 federal state county local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Council

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
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		date <u>1795 and later</u>

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The James Lane Allen House was originally a two-story Federal house. (Photo 1) The main block of the present structure was one room deep with two rooms on each floor. It has Flemish bond brickwork on its front facade and later additions were laid in common bond. Its foundation is stone and the roof is gabled. Under the roof in the original section, the rafters are numbered and joined by wooden pegs. James Lane Allen described his home place as a "brick house of the Virginia pattern ... a very good one for the time it had been built." (Photo 2)

Allen was two years old in 1851 when he moved into this house. By his own words, we know that the south wing of the house was built by the time he moved there. He wrote, "...it consisted of that part which was two storied high; but later (I do not know when or by whom) there had been added at the southern end an ell containing besides a pantry and a kitchen, one chamber, the largest room in the house." (Photo 3)

The house remained unchanged from Allen's time of residency until soon after the turn-of-the century when it was purchased by Frederick Johnson, an Eastern horseman who began the process of preservation. He added a large room onto the north side of the house which now is used as a dining room (Photo 4). Subsequent owners continued rehabilitating the house and the last major addition was the north wing during the 1930's which was built to house the kitchen and garage (Photo 5). The original four rooms have been tastefully remodeled and the enclosed staircase remains in the room now used as the front hall (Photo 6). The front window in this room measures 30 inches in depth and has reeded woodwork (Photo 7). The original parlor serves as the library (Photo 8) and the south wing, which was erected before "Laney" Allen's remembrance, but which he recalled as his parent's bedroom, now serves as the living room (Photo 9). The south wing also houses two bedrooms and two bathrooms. Most of the woodwork and floors are replacements from the original. Upstairs of the main block houses two small bedrooms and a bathroom.

Over the years the house has greatly surpassed its original size but the remodeling has been in scale and with materials that have resulted in a very pleasing and comfortable house. It was described in The Bookman magazine in 1900 as "going gradually to decay" and it is to the credit of the owners since that time, that the only house belonging to this great man of literature is preserved. Although this area in Lexington has been subdivided and heavily populated for many years, the setting of the house harkens back to rural Kentucky as it is located in a well-maintained park-like setting consisting of twenty acres.

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 type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900–	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1795 and later

Builder/Architect

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

No one loved Kentucky more than James Lane Allen and no one has made Kentucky more beloved by readers than he did through his books. This is summed up most concisely when he wrote:

"This room was occupied by my father and mother. Thus, in accordance with the common custom of the country in those days, it became the general living-room of the family...In this room then...begins the history of my outdoor life. There my impressions of the physical world took earliest shape and meaning; whatsoever unimportant habits of observation I may possess were there formed, directed and rewarded; and if I have ever written anything concerning Nature which shows the slightest knowledge or feeling--if in far later years I have ever lingered over a page, vainly trying to put upon it the reality of external things as they seem to us, and the reality of the emotions they arouse in us--the origin of it all goes back to that time and place."

His stories harked back to the place of his birth for many tell about the early history of Lexington and life in the 1800's in Kentucky. He wrote about Court Days, auctions, horse trading, hemp farming, stock sales and bird lore. Allen wrote over one-hundred, twenty-five novels, short stories, essays, criticisms and travelogues. At the turn of the century, James Lane Allen was one of the best known novelists and short story writers in the United States. He wrote, "Behind all that I have written lie the landscapes of a single neighborhood." This neighborhood was the farm and house, now known as Scarlett Gate, in which he lived during the formative years of his life. In the preface to his biography on Allen, James Lane Allen and the Genteel Tradition, Grant C. Knight says, "It became apparent that he had been, for years, ranked by representative critics of an epoch as second to Hawthorne among our novelists..." John Wilson Townsend, in his book, James Lane Allen, quotes E.F. Harkins as follows:

"A few novelists know the world which renews its youth every spring and that dies every autumn, as intimately as Thoreau knew it. One of these novelists is Thomas Hardy, whose description of Edgong Heath in "The Return of the Native" has long been in use as a model in the English Department at Harvard. One of these also is James Lane Allen, the Kentucky schoolmaster."

Townsend's book which was published in 1922, has as its first sentence of Chapter I, "James Lane Allen and Henry Clay are, so far as I know, the only Kentuckians that have achieved international fame." His fame in the United States was as widespread as his stories which were published in the most popular magazines of that day. Among these were Atlantic Monthly, Harper's, Century, and Lippincott. In 1898, he was given honorary LL.D. degrees from the University of Kentucky and the following year from Tulane University.

On December 21, 1849, James Lane Allen was born on the old Poindexter Place (demolished) in Lexington. When Laney, as he was called by his family and friends, was two years old, the family moved to the farm which was given to them by his grandfather. This farm and its house, five miles out from the city, became the center of young Allen's

(continued)

9. Major Bibliographical References

See Continuation Sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property 5.9 acres

Quadrangle name Lexington West

Quadrangle scale 1: 24,000

UMT References

A

1	6	7	1	4	8	5	5	4	2	1	2	1	0	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

B

1	6	7	1	4	8	0	5	4	2	1	1	9	4	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

C

1	6	7	1	4	6	5	5	4	2	1	2	0	0	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

D

1	6	7	1	4	7	1	5	4	2	1	2	1	4	0
Zone	Easting				Northing									

E

Zone	Easting				Northing									

F

Zone	Easting				Northing									

G

Zone	Easting				Northing									

H

Zone	Easting				Northing									

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 Richard S. DeCamp - Executive Director

organization Lexington-Fayette Co. Historic Commission date August 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 May Susan Appel

title State Historic Preservation Officer date November 9, 1982

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

John Bob Grosvenor
Keeper of the National Register

date 12/30/82

for Attest: Patrick Andrews
Chief of Registration

date 12/30/82

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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James Lane Allen House
Scarlett Gate

CONTINUATION SHEET

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life. He wrote:

"Outside the yard, on every side there lay for me as a child the wonderful universe of the farm. I early began to make the acquaintance of this by sitting on the pommel before my father as he rode over it on his gaited saddle horse..."

He rode his horse to school in town and eventually entered Kentucky University (now Transylvania University) and in 1872 graduated as valedictorian of his class. Up until the age of 22, he lived in the house with his family, for in 1873 Allen accepted a job as a Greek teacher in a school in Missouri. The following year he returned and for the next several years, he continued to teach while working on a Masters of Arts degree which he received from the University of Kentucky in 1877.

In 1884, Allen gave up teaching to pursue a full-time career in writing. His first short story was printed in Harper's magazine in 1885 and a few years later Two Gentlemen of Kentucky was published. The setting of this story was the house in Lexington known as Botherum (listed on the National Register March 7, 1973). Nevertheless, it is his boyhood home that is associated with James Lane Allen, even to the extent that the road on which the house is located was changed, after his death, from Cold Spring Pike to Lane Allen Road. During the period from 1872 until he moved permanently to New York City, Allen lived in and out of Lexington and when there, resided primarily at boarding houses. None of the known ones are still standing.

In 1893, Allen moved to New York City to be near his publishers. During the next two decades he wrote prolifically and also traveled to Europe several times. His popularity in this country as a writer peaked at the turn-of-the-century, although he remained popular for many years afterwards. As Grant Knight in this biography of Allen wrote, he was "A Victorian pursuing apart his vision splendid...the desire to set before Americans the ideals of courage, the convictions of morality, the fashion of poise and gentility which he thought belonged to Anglo-Saxons."

On February 18, 1925, James Lane Allen died. He was buried next to his parents in the Lexington Cemetery and the school children scattered flowers on his grave. In his will he left Lexington, the city that he loved, all the copyrights and royalties of his books. His estate, valued at twelve-thousand dollars, was to be used to build a fountain. This fountain is at the northend of Gratz Park and there is a plaque which reads: "A Fountain Dedicated to Youth. This gift to the children of Lexington is the generous bequest of James Lane Allen, distinguished Kentucky author. Erected A.D. 1933."

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Bibliography

Allen, James Lane (1849-1925) - booklet of information compiled by students at James Lane Allen School, 1981-82.

Bottorff, William K., James Lane Allen. Indiana University, 1964.

Knight, Grant C., James Lane Allen and the Genteel Tradition, Chapel Hill, 1955.

Mastin, Bettye Lee, Sunday Herald-Leader, January 9, 1955, p. 16.

Niles, Rena, Sunday Louisville Courier-Journal. May 29, 1955, pages 14-16.

Townsend, John Wilson, James Lane Allen, Courier-Journal Job Printing Company, Louisville, Kentucky, 1928.

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James Lane Allen

CONTINUATION SHEET House

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Verbal boundary description and justification:

The boundary begins at a point (2) approximately 75 feet south of the southeast corner of the main house and proceeds northwest 470 feet to a point (3) thence northeast 550 feet to a point (4), thence southeast 450 feet across the front of the property to a point (1) thence southwest 550 feet to the point of origin, thereby incorporating the house, and scenic approach with handsome trees and drystack stone wall bordering the road.



at

James Lane Allen House
Fayette County, Kentucky
Planning Commission Map
Current
Scale 1" = 200"feet

Map 2 of 2