

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**DATA SHEET**

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED **DEC 16 1975**  
DATE ENTERED **JUN 18 1976**

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

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

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

**Red River Presbyterian Meeting House Site and Cemetery**

AND/OR COMMON

**Red River Meeting House and Cemetery**

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

**Kentucky Highway 663**

—NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

**Adairville**

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

**05**

STATE

**Kentucky**

VICINITY OF

CODE

**021**

COUNTY

**Logan**

CODE

**001**

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNOCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SITE	<b>PUBLIC ACQUISITION</b>	<b>ACCESSIBLE</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> PARK
			<input type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

**First Federal Savings and Loan Association**

STREET & NUMBER

**P.O. Box 960**

CITY, TOWN

**Bowling Green**

VICINITY OF

STATE

**Kentucky**

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

**Logan County Courthouse**

STREET & NUMBER

**Fourth Street**

CITY, TOWN

**Bowling Green**

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

**401 Wapping Street, Frankfort**

STATE

**Kentucky**

# 7 DESCRIPTION

## CONDITION

EXCELLENT                       DETERIORATED  
 GOOD                                 RUINS  
 FAIR                                  UNEXPOSED

## CHECK ONE

UNALTERED  
 ALTERED (replica)

## CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE  
 MOVED      DATE \_\_\_\_\_

---

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

Located just north of the Tennessee border in south central Kentucky, the Red River Meeting House complex lies on both sides of the old east-west road, now Route 663, that meanders along the border. At this point, amid fine rolling farmland interspersed with aged forest tracts, the Maulding's Fork of the Red River (this is one of several Red Rivers in Kentucky; it flows southward into Tennessee, and is not to be confused with the one that flows out of eastern Kentucky through the Red River Gorge) approaches the south side of the road in a sharp bend said to contain Indian mounds as well as other historic sites. (It is possible that the entire area will eventually, after further research and archeological investigation, be nominated to the National Register as an historic/prehistoric district.)

Up a short lane north of the road (past the supposed site of John McPherson's House and Apothecary Shop) is the Red River Meeting House Cemetery. In a slight jog to the right is the site of the original c. 1790 log meeting house. One corner is marked with a cairn-like modern monument (photo 5). The markers in the graveyard are themselves interesting, reflecting the changes in style and material of such markers through almost two hundred years. The graveyard is defined by rows of old trees separating it from the surrounding farmland. At the east side of the cemetery is a linear indentation in the ground, believed to be the location of an early road. Just beyond it to the northeast, on the site of the 1847 frame church (photo 4), is the replica of the original meeting house, considered to be one of the better recent reconstructions of early log structures (photos 2 and 3). Developed by Professor Frank Cheek, it was based on a drawing (photo 1). The reconstructed building, which faces south, is approximately 16' x 30' feet in size. Well-shaped hand-hewn logs form the walls, with dove-tail notching at the corners. The chinking is a combination of mud and cement. The low forward-facing gable-ends are filled with wide weatherboards. There are two shuttered windows on the west side flanking the (incorrectly located) stone chimney and three or four on the east side. The lower logs are set on stone foundations and there are stone steps before the doors. The two doors have frames of plain flat boards. The roof is split shingles.

The interior is also plain, with a raised platform at the north end. Simple hand-made benches for the pews. There are uncarpeted wooden floors and few trimmings, except for the strong mantel on the west side.

# 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 checked="" 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 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 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 c. 1790 (original);  
1959 (replica)

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

In 1800 the Red River Meeting House located in Logan County, Kentucky, was the scene of one of the first of a series of meetings which later came to be known as the Great Revival, a notable event in the religious history of the early frontier. The movement had its origins in the late 18th century in Logan County, near the Tennessee border in southeast Kentucky. At the turn of the century the revivalist or camp meeting quickly gained popularity, spreading to Tennessee, Virginia, North and South Carolina, and even into Georgia. The effect was to increase the numbers on Methodist and Baptist rolls, no doubt to improve the moral tone of the inhabitants of the region, and to produce schisms within the Presbyterian Church which resulted in the creation of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and a new denomination, the Christian Church (Thompson, p. 140-142).

The original log church at Red River was constructed roughly between 1786 and 1792 northeast of James Mauldings' fort, one of the earliest settlements in Logan County built in 1780 (Finley, II, p. 8). The county was formed in 1792 when Kentucky became a state. The community of Red River was settled largely by Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, such as John McPherson who opened an apothecary shop in his log house (razed in 1886) which stood about 100 yards south of the Red River church. Other Scotch-Irish settlers to become associated with the Red River church were members of the distinguished Ewing family, which consisted of several brothers who emigrated from Virginia in the 1790s.

The first of the brothers to come to the Red River area was Young Ewing, who arrived about 1791. In 1792 he served as one of the first magistrates for Logan County and was elected a member of the State House of Representatives in 1795. He later moved to nearby Christian County where he was selected a member of the 1799 convention that framed Kentucky's second constitution. Reuben Ewing was also to become prominent in the political life of the county. He served, as did Young, as a delegate to the 1799 constitutional convention from Logan County, was associate judge in 1803, and elected to the State House in 1822. Urban Ewing served in the House of Representatives in 1803, 1807, 1809, 1811, 1813, and 1814. The two most famous of the brothers and those most closely associated with the Red River church were Finis, one of the founders of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church,

(continued)

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

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(continued)

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 3.54

UTM REFERENCES

A 16 516550 4063750  
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B                 
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

C                 
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

D                 
ZONE EASTING NORTHING

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

Mrs. Frank J. Cheek, Jr.

GM/WEL

ORGANIZATION

DATE

STREET & NUMBER

1492 Tates Creek Road

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

Lexington

STATE

Kentucky

**12 STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER CERTIFICATION**

THE EVALUATED SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS PROPERTY WITHIN THE STATE IS:

NATIONAL     

STATE X

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.

~~\_\_\_\_\_  
CERTIFICATE REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE~~

Eldred W. Melton

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

12/8/75

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Acting DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST:

47 Melton  
Charles [Signature]

DATE

6/18/76

Acting KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

6.17.76

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and Robert (1760-1832), who is buried in the Red River church graveyard. Robert Ewing's distinguished career included service as a general during the Revolutionary War, member of the North Carolina legislature (1787-89), member of the State House from Logan County in 1799, State Senator (and Speaker) in 1817, and one of Kentucky's ten electors in the presidential elections of 1809, 1813, and 1817 (Finley, p.24; Collins, Volume I, pp. 356, 363, 368, 369; Volume II, p. 482).

It is probable that Robert Ewing's first association with the area was in 1785 when he was appointed Deputy Surveyor to James Thompson, first surveyor of Lincoln County, Virginia (later Kentucky). In 1789 Ewing obtained a land grant on the Middle Fork of Red River very near or part of the settlement and immediately began to build a house with the help of slaves and money from his father's estate. By the fall of 1792 he removed his family to Kentucky. It is during this general period that Ewing was instrumental in the building of the Red River church.

The church came into prominence during the ministry of James McGready, who came from a pastorate in North Carolina to settle in 1796 near the Red River Presbyterian Church. In 1797 he organized two churches on the Gasper and Muddy Rivers and by the end of 1797, was the pastor of three churches in Logan County (Finley, II, p.10). McGready had been ousted from his North Carolina church because of his advocacy of revivalism, which had broken out at Hampden-Sydney College in Virginia in 1784-89 (Thompson, p. 131).

Religion on the southern frontier had suffered from a lack of interest by settlers during the period surrounding the end of the Revolution. This was due, perhaps, to demoralization over the war but can also be attributed to the spread of a rationalistic spirit and other religious and philosophical ideas then prevailing in France (Thompson, p. 126). McGready felt the time right for revivalism and his enthusiasm soon produced telling effect. In Logan County in particular interest was exhibited in 1797 and resumed during the summer of 1799. In July, 1799, McGready wrote of an experience at Red River:

On Monday the solemnity was very great during the time of preaching: many of the most bold, daring sinners in the county were brought to cover their faces and weep bitterly. After the congregation was dismissed, a considerable number of people staid [sic] lingering about the door, as if unwilling to depart. Solemnity appeared in every countenance, and some of them were bathed in tears. Some of the minsters

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told me, that we ought to collect the people into the house and pray with them; which was done. It appeared evident that the power of God filled the house—Christians were filled with joy and peace in believing, and sinners were powerfully alarmed under an apprehension of the horrors of an unconverted state" (New York Missionary Magazine, p. 152).

A year later, in June 1800, McGready tells of another gathering at Red River:

The first extraordinary manifestation of divine power was at Red River, where the Sacrament of the Supper was administered on the third Sabbath of June. This was indeed a blessed day of the Son of Man--The Lord afforded more than common light, life and zeal to his ministers, and more than common life to the exercise of his praying people. Upon every day of the occasion, there were visible tokens of the love and goodness of God. Christians were filled with joy and peace in believing; and poor distressed, condemned sinners were brought to see the glory and fulness of a crucified Jesus, and to feel the power and efficacy of his merits and atonement-- But Monday was indeed the great day of the feast: Mr. Hodge preached a powerful, moving sermon, from Job, xxii, 21. During the sermon, a woman, who had been many months under deep convictions, I trust, was brought to Christ, and could not refrain from breaking out into an amazing rapture of joy and adoration, for a few minutes. At the close of the sermon, a dreadful, striking solemnity overspread the whole assembly-- the vast multitude were all in tears--awakened sinners were struck with such keen, piercing convictions, that many of them fell to the ground, and roared out in extreme anguish, "What shall I do to be saved?" Some of God's dear children were filled with a sense of love and goodness of God in Christ to their souls, like bottles filled with new wine, till their bodily strength was almost gone. It was truly affecting to see little boys and girls, of nine, ten, and twelve years of age, and some younger, lying prostrate on the ground, weeping, praying and crying out for mercy, like condemned criminals at the place of execution; and that in the presence of the multitude. We have reason to believe that the number truly and savingly brought to Christ, on this occasion, and till the Tuesday night following, were about ten persons (Ibid., pp. 154-155).

The good news was spread by the 400-500 people present and much interest was generated. Other meetings followed in quick succession. However, the large number of people who came to Red River made it imperative to provide in some way for the throngs likely to attend subsequent meetings. At gatherings held at Gasper River during the months of July and August, 1800, the campground gained favor. Afterward camp meetings came to be a regular feature of the revival

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with provisions and bedding brought from home (Cleveland, p. 54).

Reports of the happenings in Logan County spread and people traveled long distances to the area to witness these strange events for themselves. One such visitor was Barton W. Stone, a Presbyterian minister from Bourbon County, who had known Mr. McGready in North Carolina: "Having heard of a remarkable religious excitement in the south of Kentucky and Tennessee under the labors of James McGready and other Presbyterian ministers I was very anxious to be among them; and early in the spring of 1801, I went there to attend camp-meeting. There, on the edge of the prairie in Logan County, Kentucky, the multitudes came together and continued a number of days and nights encamped on the grounds... The scene was to me new and passing strange. It baffled description... My conviction was complete that it was good -- the work of God; nor has my mind wavered since on the subject... I returned with ardent spirits to my congregations... Multitudes had collected, anxious to hear the religious news of the meeting I had attended in Logan " (Stone, p. 34). Stone decided to participate directly in the movement and the largest and most famous Great Revival camp meeting was held at Stone's Cane Ridge Church in Bourbon County in August, 1801. The attendance has been estimated at 12,000 to 15,000 people (Short, p. 273).

Up to 1803, revivals continued with unabated zeal and spread to neighboring states. Excitement appeared to lessen after 1805, however, although sporadic revivals continued until a later date in various localities, but the movement was no longer general (Cleveland, p. 86).

The Great Revival stimulated religious life as a whole on the frontier, with the Baptists and Methodists gaining sizeable numbers to their church rolls. On the other hand, the movement was detrimental to Presbyterian interests in the West, owing to the schisms which occurred in Kentucky as a direct consequence of the revival movement. A bitter controversy between revivalist and anti-revivalist forces resulted in the secession of five ministers from the synod which included such figures as Robert Marshall and Barton Stone. The ministers, popular with their congregations, took large numbers with them as they left. The group, which came to be called New Lights, Stoneites, Marshallites, proved similar in purpose and theology to Alexander Campbell and his followers, who called themselves Disciples of Christ. In 1832 the groups merged, forming the Christian Church or Disciples of Christ. (Cleveland, p. 139).

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The New Light schism, states one writer of the period, can also be said to have prepared ground for the development of Shakerism in the West (Cleveland, p. 144). By 1807 a number of Shaker communities were established in Kentucky and Ohio. (One such community was that at South Union also in Logan County not far from Red River, founded in 1807. Related buildings were placed on the National Register June 28, 1974, and April 3, 1975.)

Another schism within the Presbyterian Church grew out of the problem encountered by congregations in providing ordained ministers in sufficient numbers to meet the increased demand for preachers. The Kentucky synod objected to the ordination of ministers such as Finis Ewing whom they felt did not possess the required educational level. Hearings were held before a committee set up by the synod to work out the difficulties. Agreement was not reached, however, and in 1806 the synod dissolved the Cumberland Presbytery. In 1810 Finis Ewing, Samuel King, Samuel McAdoo constituted themselves an independent presbytery, calling it the Cumberland presbytery. This was the beginning of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church, which, when its first synod was organized in October 1813, contained 60 congregations, grouped under three presbyteries (Finley, p. 60, Collins, p. 433).

The log Red River meeting house, which saw the beginning of the Great Revival in the West, collapsed in 1856. A pen sketch drawn, it is thought, in the mid-19th century still exists. The artist, who remains unknown, was traveling through the area with William H. Milburn, former chaplain of the U. S. House of Representatives. A frame church was built in 1847 on property donated by Thomas J. Townsend. This building was razed in the winter of 1929-30. In 1959 a replica of the first log church at Red River was constructed, the plans drawn up by Frank J. Cheek, Jr., Professor of Civil Engineering, University of Kentucky, using the early pen sketch as a guide. The replica could not be rebuilt on the original site because graves had since been placed there. Therefore it was erected on the site of the 1847 church approximately 200 hundred yards northeast of the original (a stone monument now marks the spot of the original northwest cornerstone). The replica also differs from the original in the placement of the stone chimney on the west side rather than the east side, and in the absence of a chimney added in the middle of the roof for a stove.

Of historic interest, too, is the Red River graveyard, containing approximately 351 graves. Among those buried there are General Robert Ewing and other veterans of the Revolutionary War and the War of 1812.



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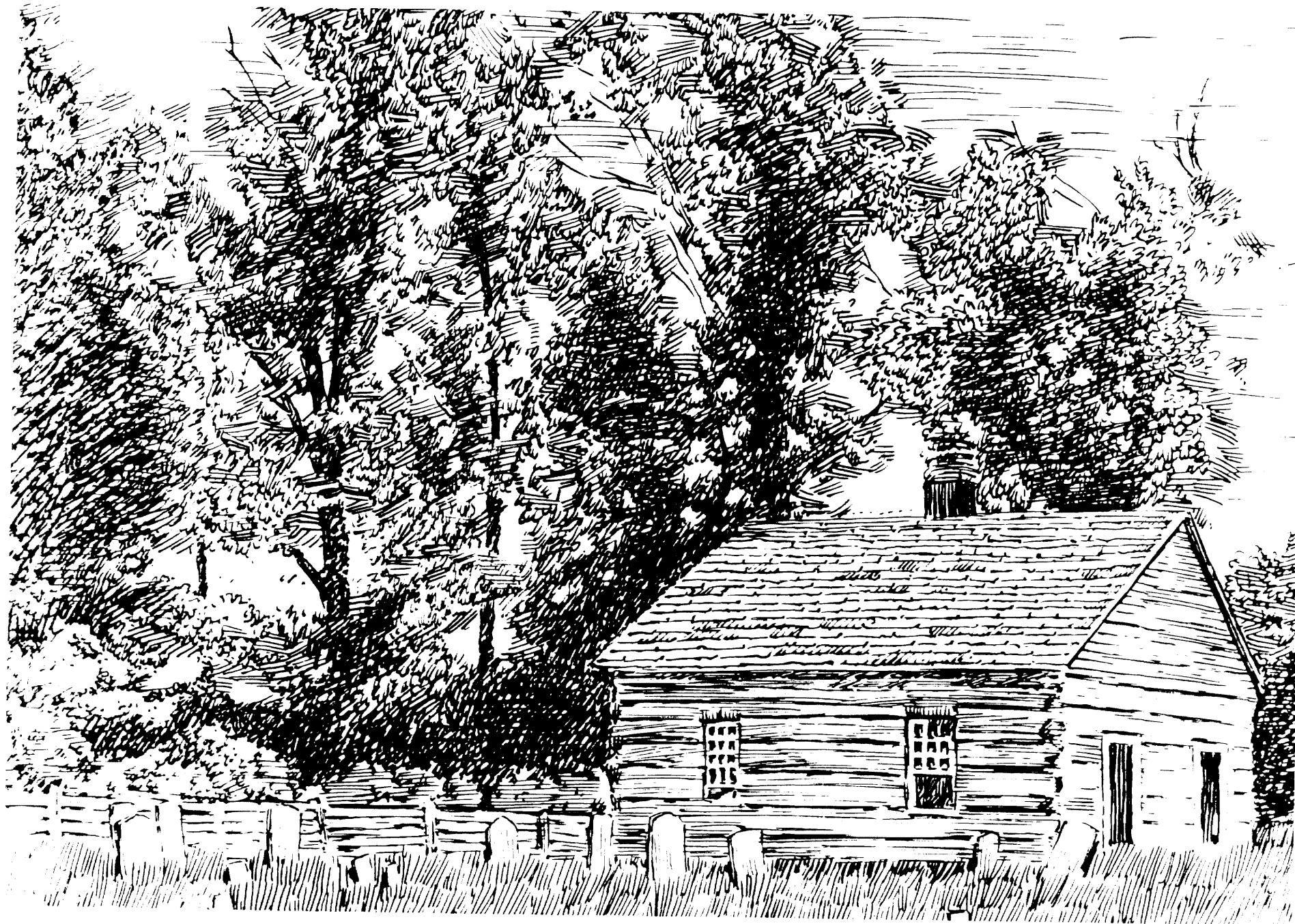
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**2 LOCATION**

CITY, TOWN

Adairville

\_\_\_\_ VICINITY OF

COUNTY

Logan

STATE

Kentucky

**3 PHOTO REFERENCE**

PHOTO CREDIT Photograph of a sketch by an unknown  
artist.

DATE OF PHOTO

mid-19th century

NEGATIVE FILED AT Mrs. Frank Cheek, 1492 Tates Creek Road  
Lexington, Ky.

**4 IDENTIFICATION**

DESCRIBE VIEW, DIRECTION, ETC. IF DISTRICT. GIVE BUILDING NAME & STREET

Photo of a sketch of the original log church.

PHOTO NO.

1