

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received **MAY 26 1982**
date entered **JUN 1 1982**

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

1. Name

historic Stuart, Jesse, House

and/or common Same

2. Location

street & number Stuarts Lane off W-Hollow Road NA not for publication

city, town South of Greenup X vicinity of ~~Congressional district~~

state Kentucky code 021 county Greenup code 089

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<u> </u> district	<u> </u> public	<u>X</u> occupied	<u> </u> agriculture
<u>X</u> building(s)	<u>X</u> private	<u> </u> unoccupied	<u> </u> commercial
<u> </u> structure	<u> </u> both	<u> </u> work in progress	<u> </u> educational
<u> </u> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<u> </u> entertainment
<u> </u> object	<u>NA</u> in process	<u>X</u> yes: restricted	<u> </u> government
	<u>NA</u> being considered	<u> </u> yes: unrestricted	<u> </u> industrial
		<u> </u> no	<u> </u> military
			<u> </u> museum
			<u> </u> park
			<u>X</u> private residence
			<u> </u> religious
			<u> </u> scientific
			<u> </u> transportation
			<u> </u> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Mr. Jesse Stuart

street & number W-Hollow

city, town Greenup X vicinity of state Kentucky

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Greenup County Courthouse

street & number

city, town Greenup state Kentucky

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky has this property been determined eligible? yes X no

date 1978 federal X state county local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Division

city, town Frankfort state Kentucky

7. Description

Condition

excellent
 good
 fair

deteriorated
 ruins
 unexposed

Check one

unaltered
 altered

Check one

original site
 moved date _____

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Jesse Stuart House possesses an unusually scenic location in a wooded valley in rural Greenup County in northeastern Kentucky. Facing westward toward Stuarts Lane off W-Hollow Road, the residence is approximately two miles south of Greenup, the county seat, which lies just to the south of the Ohio River.

The residence was built in stages, as is evident by the varying levels of the different units. The exterior, completely covered by wood shingles, has a one-story porch which stretches over the front entrance. Contained within are seven rooms on the first floor, in addition to two baths and a garage at the western end.

The front door gives entrance to a living room which, in addition to the room directly above, is log, and thought to date to 1825.¹ Adjacent to the living room is the study, with double windows on the west (front) wall, constructed in the 1920s. The remaining rooms, with the exception of the southernmost room, were added in the 1940s (see floor plan). The section at the far southern end was constructed in 1960.

The second floor, which is reached by an enclosed staircase in the southwestern corner of the living room, contains three rooms.

Directly to the rear of the house are two outbuildings--a frame smokehouse and hen house, both of post-1940 construction.

The nominated area consists of the house and the narrow valley in which the house sits and to which it relates visually.

¹According to information provided by Van Denton, Kentucky Nature Preserves Commission, Frankfort, Kentucky.

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/ humanitarian
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
<input checked="" 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 1825; c.1920; 1940s;
1958 **Builder/Architect** Unknown

Statement of Significance (In one paragraph)

The Jesse Stuart House is significant in being the residence of noted Kentucky author and poet Jesse Stuart (b.1907). His position in American literary history has been established as a result of his abundant writing in many literary genres, and because of his effective portrayal of Appalachia. He has been described by J. Donald Adams in the New York Times Book Review as a "local colorist of the first rank--probably the best we have produced in the United States."¹ His most acclaimed and best known works include Man With a Bull-Tongue Plow (1934), Head O'W-Hollow (1937), Taps for Private Tussie (1934), Album of Destiny (1944), and The Thread That Runs So True (1949). Stuart wrote most of his influential works in the house in W-Hollow where he presently resides and which has been his home since 1939.

Born August 8, 1907, in an area known as W-Hollow, Jesse Stuart has spent most of his life in this section of Greenup County, Kentucky. Although he has traveled and lectured throughout the world, the inspiration for his writing came from the land and the people of eastern Kentucky. Geographically, the Stuart country is limited to Greenup, Carter, and Floyd counties, and the bordering areas along the western-most edge of the Cumberland Plateau. His works contain a rich sampling of the diversified folklore of the community. Other writers have attempted to capture the folkways of the Appalachian people, but few have been as effective as Stuart. Jesse Stuart can so faithfully express the culture and life of these people because he writes of his own heritage.² The Chicago Sunday Tribune critic has stated "Early Stuart was regarded as a regional writer. That was a superficial judgement. . . . Jesse Stuart was always broader than any region, and his regional accents were used for a purpose. . . . He writes that he knows, and he knows far more than most of those who have tried to follow were he led."³

Spanning more than half a century from 1927, many of his works are still in print. As of 1968, approximately eighteen of his major books were available in book stores, a phenomenal achievement for any poet-fictionist. His production has been massive and of impressive variety--twelve novels, thirteen volumes of short stories, eight junior works, six autobiographical works, as well as a number of other books. His work has been published in over thirty countries.

Many honors awarded Stuart include: Guggenheim Fellowship (1939); the Academy of Arts and Sciences Award for Men of the Mountains (1941); the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Award for Taps for Private Tussie (1943); Poet Laureate of Kentucky (1954); and the Academy of American Poets Award for the Distinguished Service of American Poetry (1961).⁴ (See addendum for a more detailed discussion of Stuart's career.)

9. Major Bibliographical References

- Birmingham, Frederick A. The Writer's Craft. New York: Hawthorne Publishers, 1958.
 Clark, Mary Washington. Jesse Stuart's Kentucky. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968.
 Foster, Ruel. Jesse Stuart. New York: Twayne Publishers, 1968. (Continued)

10. Geographical Data

UTM NOT VERIFIED

Acreeage of nominated property approximately 1.7 acres

Quadrangle name Greenup, Kentucky

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	6	3	4	0	0	4	0	4	2	6	8	2	8	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

B

1	6	3	4	0	0	2	0	4	2	6	8	2	10	10
Zone		Easting				Northing								

C

1	6	3	3	9	8	0	0	4	2	6	8	2	8	0
Zone		Easting				Northing								

D

1	6	3	3	9	8	2	0	4	2	6	8	3	8	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

Beginning at the mid-point of the house, the boundary extends 125' due north, and running in a westwardly direction 400'; curving southward and running eastward 650' (along a line roughly 150' from and somewhat parallel to the northernmost boundary line). The line then

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

(continued)

state	N/A	code	county	code

state	code	county	code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Jayne C. Henderson, Historian, Gloria Mills, Historian

organization Kentucky Heritage Commission date August 1979

street & number Berry Hill Mansion, U.S. 60 telephone 502/564-7005

city or town Frankfort state Kentucky 40601

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 Mary Brown Dept

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 5/21/82

For NPS use only

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

Carol D. Skell date 6-1-82

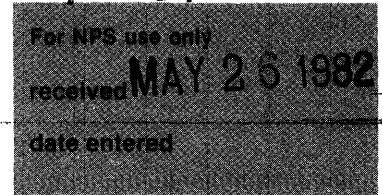
Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Carl Duke date 6/1/82

Chief of Registration

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**



Continuation sheet Stuart, Jesse, House Item number 8 Page 2
Greenup County, Kentucky

During his lifetime Jesse Stuart has lived in five different houses in W-Hollow. The farm where he presently resides has been his home since 1939. It was here he did most of his early writing that brought him such renown.

The core of the Jesse Stuart House is log, constructed in 1825. Naomi and Jesse Stuart built a frame house around this section and have lived here since their marriage. Although the log house is no longer visible and has undergone many additions, the importance of the structure is through its association with one of Kentucky's most prominent authors. On August 8, 1979, Jesse Stuart was seventy-three years old, marking approximately forty-five years as a professional writer. Scholar Ruel Foster observed, "Now that Robert Frost is gone, Stuart seems to be the last of the living poets with a genuine knowledge of an old and vanished way of life. . . . When the definitive history of the American short story is written, Jesse Stuart's name may well be near the top of the list as one of the best writers in this genre. . . . He has created a place, and wedged it everlastingly in the imagination of American."⁵

¹Barbara Harte, Carolyn Riley, Ed., Contemporary Authors (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969) p. 56.

²Mary Washington Clark, Jesse Stuart's Kentucky (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968) p.95.

³Idem, Contemporary Authors (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969) p.112.

⁴Information received of Dr. Harold Richardson, Professor of English, University of Louisville.

⁵Ruel Foster, Jesse Stuart (New York: Twayne Publishers, 1968) p. 142.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED FEB 28 1980
DATE ENTERED

Stuart, Jesse, House
Greenup County, Kentucky

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

Harte, Barbara and Riley, Carolyn, ed. Contemporary Authors. Vols. 5-8
New York: McGraw-Hill, 1969.

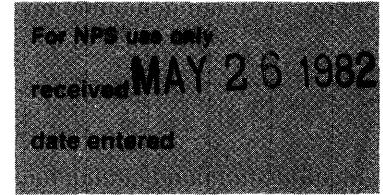
Information received of Dr. Harold Richardson, Professor of English,
University of Louisville.

Information provided by Ms. Van F. Denton, April 1982, Kentucky Nature
Preserves Commission, Frankfort, Kentucky.

Information provided by Mr. Morris Norfleet, President, Morehead State
University, Morehead, Kentucky, May 1982.

**United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
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Continuation sheet Jesse Stuart House
 Greenup County, KY Item number 10 Page 2

Verbal Boundary Description (continued)

turns northward and extends 150', running along the Town Branch to a point; turning westwardly and extending 250' to the point of beginning.

Justification

The house sits in a narrow valley, oriented toward Stuarts Lane and the Town Branch. The nominated area follows the natural boundary formed by the surrounding hills--the line skirting around the rim of the hills to encompass the main house, hen house, and the smokehouse (see sketch map).

The eastern extent of the nomination crosses Stuarts Lane to the west side of the Town Branch, to which the house is related historically and geographically.

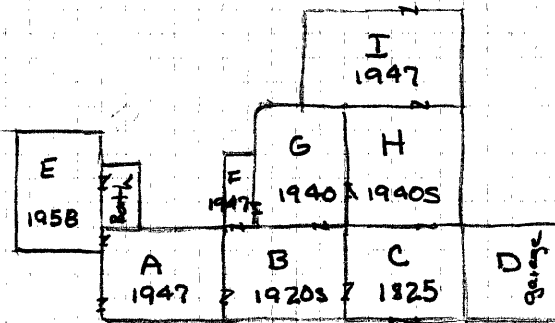
JESSE STUART HOUSE GREENUP COUNTY

1982 NOT TO SCALE
gm

Chicken coop

Smokehouse

- A LIVING AREA
- B STUDY
- C LIVING AREA
- D GARAGE
- E BEDROOM
- F BATH
- G BEDROOM
- H DINING AREA
- I KITCHEN



STUARTS LANE

RECORDED
MAY 26 1982

NATIONAL
REGISTER

Jesse Stuart House
Greenup County, Kentucky

Map 1
Sketch map of house and outbuildings.
Boundary marked in red.

MAY 26 1982

Jesse Stuart's position in American literary history is secure because of his abundant writing in many literary genres, because of his portrayal of Appalachia, because of his creation of a fictional region called W-Hollow, and because many noted critics and scholars of American literature agree that Stuart rates a high place in American literary history.

Stuart has over 3000 publications, including nearly 55 books, 460 short stories, 2100 poems, and 400 articles, which represent almost every literary genre: poetry, short fiction, the novel, autobiography, biography, journalism, children's stories, and essays. His subject matter ranges from celebrations of the renewal of life in springtime to depictions of the struggle to overcome obstacles in harsh environments to hilarious tall tales and to sharp social and political commentary. Among Stuart's most notable book-length publications are the following:

- Man with a Bull-Tongue Plow (1934), his first volume of poetry and one that features the sonnet as a literary form. He was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship in 1939, primarily on the basis of his writing this book and Head O' W-Hollow.

- Head O' W-Hollow (1937), a collection of short fiction that introduced W-Hollow to the world and which was among the best sellers in its year of publication.

- Beyond Dark Hills (1938), originally an extensive paper written for a graduate class at Vanderbilt University and which he later revised into a volume of autobiography.

- Men of the Mountains (1941), which continues the stories about W-Hollow and which won the Academy of Arts and Sciences Award for that year.

- Taps for Private Tussie (1943), a novel that won the Thomas Jefferson Memorial Award and was a Book-of-the-Month Club selection.

- Album of Destiny (1944), which consists of 444 poems that were praised highly by a reviewer in the New York Times: "Except for Conrad Aiken, nobody among living American poets commands the beauty of the single line with more power than Jesse Stuart Album of Destiny is his best and places him in the first rank" (New York Times, December 10, 1944, section 7, p. 29).

In addition, two of Stuart's books have made enormous impact outside literary circles. The Thread That Runs So True (1949) was designated by the National Education Association as the most important book on education that year and has been described by many as a book that every future teacher should read. The Year of My Rebirth (1956), which recounts the story of Stuart's first major heart attack and his successful recovery and which has inspired thousands of heart attack victims, was given a special award by the American Heart Association.

In his writings, Stuart is the voice of Appalachian society, for he has created the broadest, most all-encompassing view of Appalachian culture in all its diversity. Stuart's literary works have depicted the variety of religious customs practiced by Appalachians, the heroism of men and women against the cruel climatic conditions of eastern Kentucky, the beauty

of that region's natural landscape, and the rich idioms of Appalachian speech. According to John T. Flanagan, professor of American literature at the University of Illinois,

Jesse Stuart's mastery of the regional novel is particularly notable in his treatment of rustic speech. His ear for the language, for the syntax, solecisms, and localisms of the hill people, is remarkable, reminiscent of George Washington Cable's command of Creole dialect or Mark Twain's knowledge of the diction of Missouri Negroes and poor whites.

("Jesse Stuart, Regional Novelist," in Jesse Stuart: Essays on His Work, edited by J.R. LeMaster and Mary Washington Clarke [Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1977], p. 77.)

J.R. LeMaster, in Jesse Stuart: Kentucky's Chronicler-Poet (Memphis State University Press, 1980) states,

Through book after book he [Stuart] has made the history of his area available for new generations of readers. His history of Appalachian culture will be of importance to the nation's cultural historians for a long time to come, and those who set out to write a new history of Appalachian culture will find him indispensable. (p. 199)

Stuart's microcosm of the Appalachian macrocosm is the fictionalized world of W-Hollow, Greenwood City, and Greenwood County (the actual W-Hollow, Greenup, and Greenup County, Kentucky), which in the words of John T. Flanagan "is a region that he has delineated carefully, faithfully, and often affectionately, until in the minds of many readers it assumes the dimensions and the durability of Faulkner's Yoknapatawpha County." (Jesse Stuart: Essays on His Works, p. 87.) Ruel Foster, in his book-length work on Stuart, also praises Stuart's creation of the fictional W-Hollow as having,

now taken its permanent place in the timeless geography of American fiction. It will keep its place there long after more fashionable writers of the present have faded completely away. The undoubted endurance of his creation is a prime measure of Stuart's accomplishment as a fictionist.

(Jesse Stuart [New York: Twayne Publishers, Inc., 1968], p. 153)

At the center of W-Hollow is the home of the Stuarts, where for nearly 50 years they have lived in a house (part of which, according to Stuart, dates back to the 1840's) that is now the site of pilgrimages for Stuart scholars and fans (H. Edward Richardson, "Stuart Country: The Man-Artist and the Myth," Jesse Stuart: Essays on His Work, p. 5). Stuart has written the vast majority of his works while living in this home.

Several prominent literary critics have demonstrated high praise for Stuart's writings.

1. Of Stuart's overall literary production, Lee Pennington, professor of English at Jefferson Community College, has written,

As has been pointed out, he is a regionalist in the highest sense of the word, but his being so certainly does not preclude his being a writer of universal range and universal quality. He is beyond question in the main stream of the universal category.

(From The Dark Hills of Jesse Stuart [Cincinnati: Harvest Press, 1967], p. 14.)

2. Professor Ruel Foster of West Virginia University has written the following about Stuart's fiction:

Jesse Stuart is emerging as one of the leading short story writers of American literature. He is not the grandfather of the short story in this country as Washington Irving was in the nineteenth century, and he is not the brilliant theorist of fiction that Poe was. Nor does he have one or two set masterpieces vibrant with the malaise of our time as does Hemingway in "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" and "The Short

Happy Life of Francis Macomber." However, Stuart does in his best stories what our great fictionists of the last seventy years have done. He creates his own fictional world, a distinctive one, and makes us care about what goes on there.

(From "The Short Stories of Jesse Stuart," in Jesse Stuart: Essays on His Work, p. 40.)

3. Arnold Gingrich, who was the editor of Esquire for many years, singled out Stuart as the writer who appeared most frequently in Esquire:

In the October 1973 issue of Esquire, Arnold Gingrich celebrated the fortieth anniversary of his magazine and reflected on innumerable past volumes and their star contributors. He observed that Jesse Stuart had appeared some fifty-eight times in the pages of Esquire since 1938 as the author of both prose and verse; moreover, Stuart's story "The Split Cherry Tree" had been anthologized more than 150 times, more frequently than Hemingway's "The Snows of Kilimanjaro."

(From John T. Flanagan, "Jesse Stuart, Regional Novelist," in Jesse Stuart: Essays on His Work, p. 70.)

4. John Howard Spurlock, professor of English at Western Kentucky University, also praises Stuart as a short story writer and as a novelist. On Stuart's stories, Spurlock writes,

Throughout this highly prolific career as a short story writer, Stuart has received wide acclaim. For example many of his stories appeared in Edward O'Brien's annual selections of the best short stories published in Story magazine--The Best Short Stories--which was published annually from 1937-1943. And this was not the empty honor it may seem in today's market of depressed demand of original stories. In these anthologies, Stuart was in the company of giants. The Best Short Stories of 1939 included stories by Jesse Stuart, Ernest Hemingway, William Faulkner, Erskine Caldwell, and F. Scott Fitzgerald. In The Best Short Stories of 1943 Stuart appeared with William Faulkner, William Saroyan, and Eudora Welty--a collection of thirty stories by well-known artists who also "appear

nearly annually in both the O. Henry Prize Stories and the Best Stories." In 1965 a Stuart short story was selected as one of "50 of the best" short stories for Story Jubilee from the hundreds of short stories published in Story magazine since its inception in 1931. This volume contained stories by such authors as Sherwood Anderson, William Faulkner, Tennessee Williams, Erskine Caldwell, Carson McCullers, Norman Mailer, William Saroyan, J.D. Salinger and Truman Capote.

(He Sings For Us: A Sociolinguistic Analysis of the Appalachian Subculture and of Jesse Stuart as a Major American Author [Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 1980], p. 144.)

And on Stuart as a novelist Spurlock writes,

Jesse Stuart's novels are every bit as excellent as his poetry and short stories, just as beautifully crafted and just as profoundly universal in the scrupulous accuracy with which they present his particular experience of the world

(He Sings For Us, p. 153.)

5. On Stuart as a keen observer and recorder of Appalachian folklore, Kenneth Clarke, professor of English and Folklore at Western Kentucky University, writes,

This sampling of folkloric elements in Stuart's works reveals the variety of both the folklore and the ways in which it serves the author's literary purposes. It reveals also the naturalness of the use of traditional materials by an "insider" in the culture. Certainly Stuart is not condescendingly genteel, and he is not on an intellectual slumming tour. He is, rather, the kind of American author some nineteenth-century critics, especially Emerson and Whitman, were calling for when they stressed the American experience in terms of strongly local, natural language rather than effete borrowing from cultivated European expression. They extolled the American workman close to the soil or the frontier rather than the aristocrat insulated from grassroots experience and expression. Development of authentic American literature, they felt, must come from the vigor of the folk experience, necessarily local, idio-

matic, and relatively independent of refined antecedent models. Such writing is enhanced by accurate use of regional folklore. Partly as a result of his familiarity with the folklore and folklife of his region, Stuart has added a strong, original voice to the main thrust of American literature.

("Jesse Stuart's Use of Folklore," in Jesse Stuart: Essays on His Work, p. 129.)

6. Professor Vera Grinstead Guthrie, the noted expert in library science, has high praise for the moral content of Stuart's children's stories:

Today there is a reemphasis on the teaching of values, which means continually discussing the ethical implications of the choices that face mankind. Certainly the books of Jesse Stuart can be the necessary and welcome intermediaries in this teaching and can speak for parents about honesty, truthfulness, ambition, resourcefulness, and other attributes they want their children to have.

("Books for Children by Jesse Stuart," in Jesse Stuart: Essays on His Work, p. 160.)

7. And one of American's foremost writers, William Saroyan, has praised Stuart in the following glowing terms:

As I see it, Jesse Stuart is a natural. A natural is somebody who could be nobody very gracefully but happens to have genius, and is therefore somebody, very gracefully. He is anonymous and a personage at the same time. Any person capable of genius and anonymity simultaneously is a person who is truly great. In his greatness is no element of stress, and in Stuart's greatness there is no stress. It is a casual, easy-going greatness. Such a greatness in a writer means better, simpler and more durable writing. It means naturalness. Stuart is one of the most natural writers in the country. I think of him as an American Robert Burns. He is not a city-made writer, and in him is none of the irritation and confusion of the city-made writer. He is, and the people of his writing are, real against a natural, not an artificial background.

(Quoted in He Sings For Us, pp. 173-74.)