

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED MAR 18 1977
DATE ENTERED DEC 21 1978

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
Samuel Pate House
AND/OR COMMON
Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
State Highway 334
CITY, TOWN
3 miles east of Lewisport
VICINITY OF
STATE
Kentucky
CODE
021
COUNTY
Hancock
CODE
091
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
2
NOT FOR PUBLICATION

3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	PRESENT USE
<input type="checkbox"/> DISTRICT	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC	<input type="checkbox"/> OCCUPIED	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> BUILDING(S)	<input 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 type="checkbox"/> SITE	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PUBLIC ACQUISITION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ACCESSIBLE	<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"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Mr. Eli Gregory
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Lewisport
VICINITY OF
STATE
Kentucky

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Hancock County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN
Hawesville
STATE
Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky

DATE
1970
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN
Frankfort
STATE
Kentucky
40601

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 Samuel Pate House is located three miles east of Lewisport, a small river town, off State Highway 334. The house, which is set back from the highway, faces south towards the road and lies on a hill which slopes gently down to the narrow bottom lands along the Ohio River.

The original portion of the house consisted of a three-bay, one, or one-and-a-half story log structure with large exterior stone chimneys at each end. The main entrance, with a four-light transom above, was centered in the north wall facing the river. A door was also located on the south directly opposite the front entrance. At a later date the logs were covered with clapboard and nine-over-six pane sash windows were installed. The stone chimney on the east end was replaced by a small interior brick one, although the stone chimney on the west side remains intact. The interior layout of the log portion consists of a central hall with one room off each side (see photo 4).

In the 1920s a full second floor was added above the log rooms and a two-bay two-story frame wing was added to the west. A plain box cornice, returned at the west end, was added to the front and back. Also at this time a small one-story frame kitchen was added to the north side of the wing. A door is placed in the east bay on the south side of the wing, as well as on the west side of the kitchen. The windows in this portion have six-over-six pane sash (see photos 1 and 2).

Sometime after the wing was built, a two-story porch, supported by seven square posts, was added across the south side, unifying the original portion and the wing. A balustrade extends around the second floor of the porch. At one time there was an exterior stairway on the porch leading to the second floor, but it has been removed. With the addition of the kitchen on the north side and the porch on the south, the front of the house was reoriented to the south, facing the road rather than the river.

A stone mounting block is located a hundred yards southeast of the house. The Pate and Thrasher family cemetery is also located near the house.

*Samuel Pate House
Lewisport, Ohio*

1920s

8 SIGNIFICANCE

PERIOD	AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
—PREHISTORIC	—ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	—COMMUNITY PLANNING	—LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	—RELIGION
—1400-1499	—ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	—CONSERVATION	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> LAW	—SCIENCE
—1500-1599	—AGRICULTURE	—ECONOMICS	—LITERATURE	—SCULPTURE
—1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE <i>below 12.22/18</i>	—EDUCATION	—MILITARY	—SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN
—1700-1799	—ART	—ENGINEERING	—MUSIC	—THEATER
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	—COMMERCE	—EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	—PHILOSOPHY	—TRANSPORTATION
—1900-	—COMMUNICATIONS	—INDUSTRY	—POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	—OTHER (SPECIFY)
		—INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES c. 1822

BUILDER/ARCHITECT Samuel Pate

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This two-story clapboard covered log house, located three miles east of Lewisport on a hill overlooking the Ohio River, was built c. 1822 by Samuel W. Pate, a farmer and justice of the peace. In 1827 Abraham Lincoln, President of the United States (1861-1865) tried his first law case—Commonwealth of Kentucky vs. Abraham Lincoln-- in the Pate house. During the trial, Lincoln successfully defended himself against the charge of operating a ferry without a license. It is said that from this incident Lincoln first developed his serious interest in the study of law.

Samuel W. Pate (1795-18 ?) owned and farmed a large number of acres along the Ohio River. In addition to being a farmer, Pate served as the justice of the peace in and for Hancock County and the state of Kentucky. In 1822 he built a two-room one-story log house for use as his residence and for court hearings. (The original two-room structure was incorporated into the present house around the turn of the century.) About this time Pate married Arretta Thrasher, daughter of Eli Thrasher, an extensive land and slave owner whose farm adjoined Pate's.

In 1827, Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865) was living in Troy, Indiana (a mile northwest of the Pate House), and working for James Taylor, a merchant and ferry operator. Lincoln's duties were divided between working as a clerk in Taylor's store and running Taylor's ferry-boat across the mouth of Anderson Creek at the Ohio River.

While working for Taylor, Lincoln built a scow, or light flatboat of his own, in his free time. On one occasion two men on the Indiana shore asked Lincoln to convey them to the middle of the river where they planned to transfer to a passing steamboat. Lincoln agreed and carried the men and their luggage to the waiting boat and was paid \$1.00 for his services.

As a result of this action, two brothers, John T. and Len Dill, operators of a ferry across the Ohio River at Anderson Creek, had Lincoln arrested for infringing on their ferry rights and for operating a ferry without a license. The case, the "Commonwealth of Kentucky vs. Abraham Lincoln," was tried in the east room of the Pate house, with Samuel Pate presiding as judge. John T. Dill presented his case, stating that he was the only person who was legally authorized to convey passengers across at that point for hire, and that Abraham Lincoln had interfered with his business when he transported two passengers to the middle of the river to meet the steamboat. (In fact the Dill brothers rented the land on the Kentucky side for their ferry landing from Samuel Pate.)

¹ Lincoln's family moved from Hardin County, Kentucky (now Larue County), where Lincoln was born, to Spencer County, Indiana in 1816.

(continue)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Barton, W. E. The Life of Abraham Lincoln. Indiannapolis: The Bobbs Merrill Company, 1925.

_____. The Woman Lincoln Loved. London: Andrew Melrose, 1927.

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A

1	6
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5	1	2	6	0	0
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4	2	0	2	4	6	0
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ZONE EASTING NORTHING

B

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ZONE EASTING NORTHING

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

The nominated area includes the land immediately surrounding the house.

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 Oppel, Historian

ORGANIZATION

Kentucky Heritage Commission

DATE

December 2, 1976

STREET & NUMBER

104 Bridge Street

TELEPHONE

502-564-6683

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

Eldred W. Milton

TITLE

State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

3/15/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

William Melrose

DATE

12/21/78

DATE

12/22/78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

I signed 12/22/78, but discussed with Dr. M on 12/21/78

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Samuel Pate House
CONTINUATION SHEET

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Abraham Lincoln defended himself by arguing that he had never carried any passengers to the Kentucky shore, and asked Pate if the ferry license, issued to Dill, forbade any other person to operate a ferry from the Indiana shore to the middle of the river. After examining the book of Kentucky statutes, Samuel Pate concluded that John T. Dill had the exclusive right under his license to operate a ferry at this point from the Kentucky shore of the Ohio River and to transport passengers across the river in either direction. But, Pate found that the law did not forbid a person carrying passengers from the Indiana shore to the middle of the river. Thus, after a short trial, the warrant against Lincoln was dropped and Abraham Lincoln won his first law case.

It is said that from this incident, Lincoln developed his first interest in the study of law. After the trial, Lincoln continued to visit the Pate family and borrowed Samuel Pate's law books to read. While on one of his visits to the Pate family, he met Caroline Meeker, Samuel Pate's niece who lived with the family. In many biographies of Lincoln's early life, Caroline Meeker is mentioned as one of Lincoln's first romantic interests. Caroline Meeker eventually married Eli Thrasher, Arretta Pate's brother. (Samuel and Arretta Pate are buried in the small cemetery behind the house along with Caroline and Eli Thrasher.)

Three years after his first exposure to the law in 1827 at the Pate house, Lincoln moved with his family to Illinois. Abraham Lincoln went on to become a lawyer and politician, serving as a member of the Illinois state legislature for four terms from 1834 to 1840, an U.S. Representative from Illinois, 1847-1849, and President of the United States, 1861-1865. Lincoln was reelected to serve a second term as president in 1864, but was assassinated by John Wilkes Booth in April 1865, only four months after taking his second oath of office.

The log house where the trial took place was enlarged and covered with clapboard around the turn of the century. The two-story porch was also added at this time. The structure continued to be used as a residence and remains in the Pate family to this day.

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Beveridge, A. J. Abraham Lincoln 1809-1858. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1928.

Coleman, J. Winston, Jr. Historic Kentucky. Lexington: Henry Clay Press, 1968.

Collins, Richard H. History of Kentucky. Volume II. Covington, Kentucky: By the author, 1874.

Luthin, Reinhard H. The Real Abraham Lincoln. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1960.

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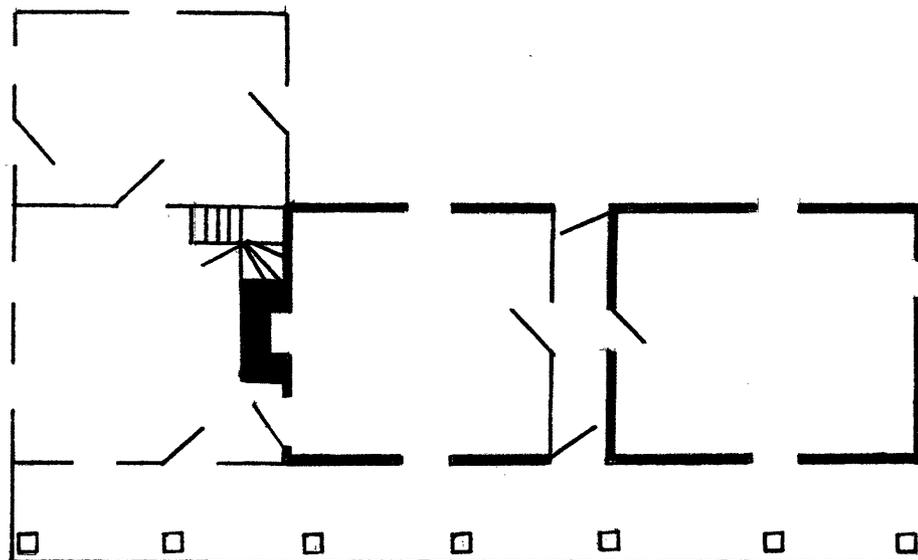
CONTINUATION SHEET

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ADDENDUM

The original log construction remains intact beneath the exterior clapboarding. The two rooms within this section have not been subdivided excepting the creation of a hall ca. 1900. What had been a window on the west was transformed into a door with the addition of a later frames section. Other than this alteration, the log portion's fenestration remains the same.

Most important, the Samuel Pate House has retained its integrity of site. There are no other residences in close proximity--the nearest one being as distant as a quarter of a mile away. There is an unobstructed view of the Ohio River to the north, and of the cemetery to the east.



Samuel Pate House, Hancock County, Kentucky

Present first floor plan. Log construction indicated
by heavier lines.

No scale.

