

PH0024261

Form 10-300  
(July 1969)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

(Type all entries - complete applicable sections)

STATE: Kentucky	
COUNTY: Franklin	
FOR NPS USE ONLY	
ENTRY NUMBER 71.3.21.0008	DATE 3/11/71

#### 1. NAME

COMMON:  
Corner in Celebrities *Historic District*

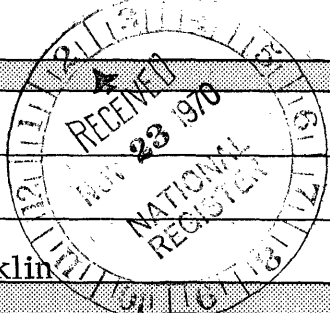
AND/OR HISTORIC:  
Old Downtown Frankfort

#### 2. LOCATION

STREET AND NUMBER:  
See Attached Map

CITY OR TOWN:  
Frankfort

STATE: Kentucky      CODE: 21      COUNTY: Franklin      CODE: 073



#### 3. CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY (Check One)	OWNERSHIP	STATUS	ACCESSIBLE TO THE PUBLIC
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> District <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Site <input type="checkbox"/> Structure <input type="checkbox"/> Object	<input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Private <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Occupied <input type="checkbox"/> Unoccupied <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preservation work in progress	Yes: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Restricted <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Unrestricted <input type="checkbox"/> No
PRESENT USE (Check One or More as Appropriate)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Commercial <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Educational <input type="checkbox"/> Entertainment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Government <input type="checkbox"/> Industrial <input type="checkbox"/> Military <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Museum	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Park <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Private Residence <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religious <input type="checkbox"/> Scientific	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation <input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify) <u>Gardens</u> <u>River Bank</u>

SEE INSTRUCTIONS

#### 4. OWNER OF PROPERTY

OWNER'S NAME:  
Multiple Public and Private

STREET AND NUMBER:  
City of Frankfort Area

CITY OR TOWN: Frankfort      STATE: Kentucky      CODE: 21

#### 5. LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE, REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.:  
Franklin County Courthouse

STREET AND NUMBER:  
St. Clair Street

CITY OR TOWN: Frankfort      STATE: Kentucky      CODE: 21

#### 6. REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE OF SURVEY:  
Historic American Building Survey

DATE OF SURVEY: 1935 - 1940       Federal       State       County       Local

DEPOSITORY FOR SURVEY RECORDS:  
Kentucky Heritage Commission

STREET AND NUMBER:  
401 Wapping Street

CITY OR TOWN: Frankfort      STATE: Kentucky      CODE: 21

STATE: \_\_\_\_\_

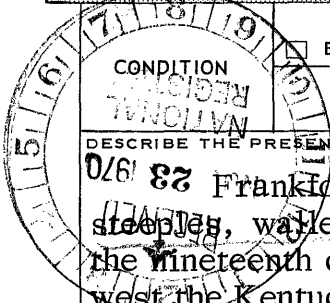
COUNTY: \_\_\_\_\_

ENTRY NUMBER: 71.3.21.0008

DATE: 3/11/71

FOR NPS USE ONLY

7. DESCRIPTION



(Check One)  
 Excellent     Good     Fair     Deteriorated     Ruins     Unexposed  
 (Check One)  
 Altered     Unaltered     Moved     Original Site

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (if known) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

1796 Frankfort's Corner in Celebrities is a district of belltowers and steeples, walled gardens and overhanging trees, beautiful enough to inspire the nineteenth century impressionist painter Paul Sawyer. On the South-west the Kentucky River makes its second slow S-curve through the town, moving, as does the London Thames, around Wapping Street which descends at its west end to a beautiful river bank - a good deal more beautiful than today's Thames but no doubt much resembling it when it was named "Wapping", around 1785, by John Instone, a Londoner who came to build boats for General Wilkinson. He must have been reminded of home by the river, the Love Tavern, and the topography.

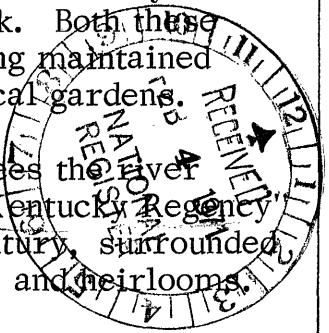
This oldest residential district with its remarkable roster of residents and visitors might be compared to Williamsburg but for two important differences: It is an architectural museum, displaying its various houses in use since their construction, some more than a century and a half old, in some cases showing additions and alterations to bow to passing styles. In only a few instances has there been a conscious effort to restore houses to their original period. Rather, they have been loved and lived in and kept in use, several in the same families, until today.

This unusual district is at no place further than two blocks from the commercial heart of Frankfort, though when the carillon plays at 6:00 P. M. one feels not only in another world but another time.

x 1796 A walk beginning at the westerly corner of Main Street at Wilkinson brings one to Liberty Hall, a Georgian house beautiful enough to stand alone without mention of its splendid array of owners and visitors. Bricks were made on the property and fine glass and hardware brought from the East. Family papers show that Thomas Jefferson urged his friend to build a one story house but John Brown's noble architecture and fine gardens have graced their corner for 175 years.

x 1835 Down the brick sidewalk toward Wapping and the river, past the connecting garden, stands the Orlando Brown house, residence of John's second son, designed in Greek Revival by Gideon Shryock. Both these houses, in perfect condition, are open to the public, being maintained by the Colonial Dames with original furnishings and typical gardens.

1928 Turning right down Wapping toward its end one sees the river bank, terraced and landscaped by the owners of a fine "Kentucky Regency" house, typical of traditional tastes of early twentieth century, surrounded by box and magnolias and furnished with family portraits and heirlooms.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

**2. SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Pre-Columbian	<input type="checkbox"/> 16th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 18th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 20th Century
<input type="checkbox"/> 15th Century	<input type="checkbox"/> 17th Century	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 19th Century	

SPECIFIC DATE(S) (If Applicable and Known)

AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE (Check One or More as Appropriate)

<input type="checkbox"/> Aboriginal	<input type="checkbox"/> Education	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Political	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban Planning
<input type="checkbox"/> Prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> Engineering	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Religion/Philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Historic	<input type="checkbox"/> Industry	<input type="checkbox"/> Science	<u>Notable events and personages thru history of area</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> Agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> Invention	<input type="checkbox"/> Sculpture	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Architecture	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Landscape Architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> Social/Humanitarian	
<input type="checkbox"/> Art	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Literature	<input type="checkbox"/> Theater	
<input type="checkbox"/> Commerce	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Military	<input type="checkbox"/> Transportation	
<input type="checkbox"/> Communications	<input type="checkbox"/> Music		
<input type="checkbox"/> Conservation			

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Corner in Celebrities is often called the most historic small neighborhood to be found in America. Here dwelt:

Two Supreme Court Justices: Thomas Todd and John Marshall Harlan

Two Cabinet Offices: George Mortier Bibb and John Jordan Crittenden

Nine United States Senators: John Brown, first Senator after Kentucky's admission to the Union, three terms and twice President Pro Tempore. James Brown: first Senator from Louisiana, Minister to France and personal deliverer of Monroe Doctrine to the French Government. George Mortier Bibb: Twice Senator from Kentucky, Secretary of the Treasury under President Tyler. John Jordan Crittenden: five times Senator, Governor of Kentucky, Member of Congress, twice U. S. Attorney, General, by Presidents William Henry Harrison and Millard Fillmore. Thomas Metcalfe: Senator, Congressman, Governor of Kentucky. William Lindsey: Senator. George Graham Vest: Senator from Missouri. Benjamin Gratz Brown: Senator from Missouri, Governor of Missouri, candidate for Vice President with Horace Greeley.

Four United States Representatives:

Robert Perkins Letcher served twelve years, was Governor of Kentucky and Minister to Mexico

James Harlan, several terms

Charles Slaughter Moorhead: Bugress and Governor of Kentucky

William Owsley: Congress and Governor of Kentucky, and

Simeon Willis: Justice Court of Appeals and Governor of Kentucky

Foreign Representatives:

Charles S. Todd: Minister to Colombia and to Russia

Thomas Leonidas Crittenden: Consul at Liverpool

Chapman Coleman: First Secretary American Legation at Berlin, Consul at Roubaix France and at Rome.

Thomas C. Jones: Consul to Frenchall, Madiera Islands

John Glover South: Minister to Panama under President Harding.



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

9. MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Kentucky Historical Society  
 "A Corner in Celebrities" Alice Trabue  
 Deed Books Franklin, Woodford, Fayette County Courthouses  
 Research Marion Rider, Atty., Willard Jillson, geologist.  
 Family papers and letters, newspaper files.  
 "The Browns of Liberty Hall" Rebecca K. Pruett

No UTM  
 EX

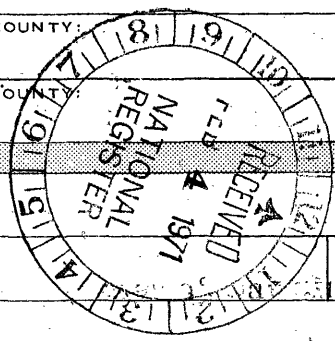
10. GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING A RECTANGLE LOCATING THE PROPERTY			OR	LATITUDE AND LONGITUDE COORDINATES DEFINING THE CENTER POINT OF A PROPERTY OF LESS THAN TEN ACRES		
CORNER	LATITUDE	LONGITUDE		LATITUDE	LONGITUDE	
	Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds		Degrees Minutes Seconds	Degrees Minutes Seconds	
NW	° ' "	° ' "		N 38° 11' 52"	W 82° 52' 48"	
NE	° ' "	° ' "				
SE	° ' "	° ' "				
SW	° ' "	° ' "				

APPROXIMATE ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY: 4 acres

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE:	CODE	COUNTY	CODE
Kentucky	21	Franklin	073
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE
STATE:	CODE	COUNTY:	CODE



SEE INSTRUCTIONS

11. FORM PREPARED BY

NAME AND TITLE: Sally Willis Meigs  
 ORGANIZATION: Historic Survey Group  
 STREET AND NUMBER: 401 Wapping Street  
 CITY OR TOWN: Frankfort  
 STATE: Kentucky  
 CODE: 21  
 DATE: 5-28-70

12. STATE LIAISON OFFICER CERTIFICATION

As the designated State Liaison 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. The recommended level of significance of this nomination is:

National  State  Local

Name: [Signature]  
 Title: Administrator, Kentucky Program Development Office

Date: January 27, 1971

NATIONAL REGISTER VERIFICATION

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

[Signature]  
 Chief, Office of Archeology and Historic Preservation

MAR 11 1971

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

ATTEST:  
[Signature]  
 Keeper of the National Register

Date: FEB 16 1971

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1913 Another 20th century house is Gardenhall, returning up Wapping from the river. This townhouse was built by D. X. Murphy, with the garden designed as an entity; the "Kentucky Regency" house, really an American original, mixing English with American colonial with Flemish end gables. Extensive walls, gardens, pergola, fountain and teahouse, enhanced with holly, box and magnolias, too, surround it.

1872 Across the street stands the monumental Italian Renaissance Todd-Lindsay house, authentic in every detail and with some 40'x80' rooms. It was built by a sea captain who vowed to have rooms where he could "dress without touching the ceiling".

1857 Opposite, the John Bibb house seems modest with only twenty rooms. It is Gothic Revival in style throughout, furnished in antiques, known as Gray Gables. Next,  
1854 the Carneal-Watson house with its running galleries and iron lace makes one think of Louisiana plantation houses, but is in fact another form of Greek Revival.

1817 The Rodman-Hewitt house was built in two sections, both Federal. If its Gothic embellishments were removed it would be very similar to the

1816 Kentucky Heritage Commission House, an early house in the district which has been restored with finest professional and historical guidance. Discoveries in restoration and deed book history show it to be much older than first thought.

1840 Across on one corner is the Letcher-Lindsay house, a large Greek Revival somewhat Victorianized to the taste of the 1880's.

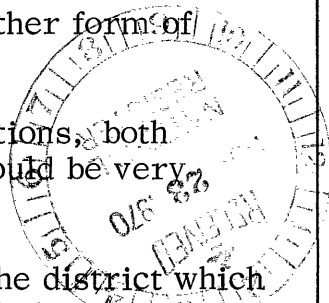
1812 On the opposite corner, Wapping & Washington, the Federal Thomas Todd house shows its origin through its Flemish bond, fanlighted doorway and elegant staircase, though Gothic additions have been made.

1850 X Next, the Catholic Church of the Good Shepherd is a meritorious Gothic Revival example, designed and built over the original small Presbyterian Church which was then removed. Opposite, the Old Post

1887 X Office and Customs House raises one of Frankfort's landmark towers and is a wonderfully charming blend of Victorian and French Empire. A

1813 X walk down St. Clair brings one to the Franklin County Courthouse, a Greek Revival building by Gideon Shryock of great architectural merit.

1815 Continue to Main and turn left, half a block on the North side stands the Owsley house, Federal style and well intact. At the West corner is the



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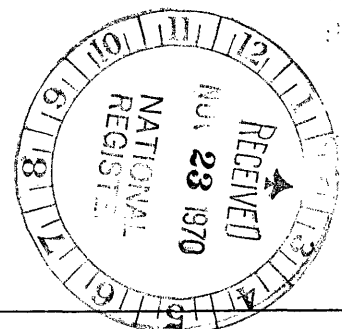
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- 1810 fine Morehead house, a Georgian mansion with original fanlight, walled garden and ten woodburning fireplaces. Federal overtones give it the distinctions one finds throughout the district. Right on Washington Street
- 1852 is the Gothic Church of the Ascension, and its beautiful church garden, whose first organ was brought across the mountains from Virginia. Across
- 1800 Washington Street are the Thomas house, in federal style, and the
- 1835 Swigert-Milan house, Greek Revival with Gothic overtones. At the north-west corner of Main and Washington, the Federal Swigert-Taylor house is reminiscent of the Gardner-White-Pingree House in Salem, impressive architecturally and unaltered. Follow its long garden wall west to the
- 1848 Presbyterian Church, an interesting Gothic Revival with gardens, and
- 1854 across the street the beautiful Labrot-Taylor house, a white Greek Revival style beautifully kept and furnished with family heirlooms.
- 1866 East on Main, the Bennett-Hazelrigg is Victorian with iron lace porch and fencing, next to the Thomas Crittenden house, a Federal Style similar
- 1800 to many which pre-date 1800. Turn the corner to the right, past its
- 1850 courtyard, and one finds the Macklin House, a Greek Revival elegantly restored and one of the best houses in the area, complete with carriage house, walled garden and gazebo. Across the street is the Gothic Revival
- 1854 Methodist Church, and returning to Main Street, on the southeast corner
- 1808 is the Chapman-Coleman-Todd house, a Federal House, and the John
- 1820 Goodman house, also Federal, but with a much earlier original back which was a carpenter's shop. A few steps more and one is back downtown in the business section.

*Jmi*  
?

The district bespeaks that its' earliest residents were people of some financial consequence and considerable taste. The fine houses they built were lived in by their families who in some cases altered and "modernized" them, and were always able to do so; so that in most cases the houses while not architecturally "pure", have remained in good condition and in harmony with their neighbors.

Somehow the neighborhood with its variety of styles possesses an overall quality that blends it, even without accompanying knowledge of its remarkable history, into an "atmosphere".



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X Major Generals of the Army:  
James Wilkinson, George Bibb Crittenden, Thomas Leonidas Crittenden,  
Oliver B. Bucher, Edgar Erskine Hume

X Admirals of the Navy:  
John Crittenden Watson, Chapman Coleman Todd, Hugh Rodman and  
Robert Phythias, Commodore.

Among their visitors numbered:

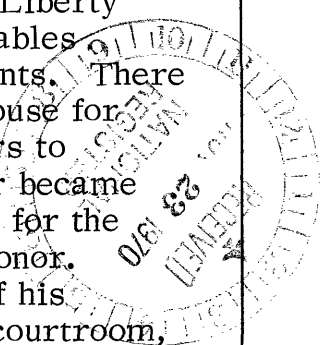
Thomas, Jefferson, James Madison, James Monroe, Andrew Jackson and Theodore Roosevelt; once three Presidents were present at one visit. Lafayette, Prince Louis Phillipe, Aaron Burr, Henry Clay and Daniel Webster were among those familiar in the neighborhood.

The residents of these houses were painted by such artists as Gilbert Stuart, Sharpless, Jouett, Joseph Bush, Robert Burns Wilson and their neighborhood depicted by Paul Sawyier. Some of these paintings remain in the houses today.

The neighborhood remains an area of lawyers, judges, the city's mayor, writers, teachers, doctors.

Frankfort was established in 1786 on one hundred acres of ground belonging to General James Wilkinson then Commander in Chief of the Western Division of the U.S. Army. He reserved for himself four acres comprising this district, and by proffering the use of the large house he had built for himself at Wilkinson and Wapping Streets, decided the location of the Capitol at Frankfort. Another early landowner was Andrew Holmes, who bought from Wilkinson, and sold the land to John Brown for Liberty Hall, one of the great houses where so many Presidents and notables visited, as Brown was a personal friend of the first five Presidents. There was built, by Gideon Shryock, the neighboring Orlando Brown house for John's son, and from this distinguished family came many honors to Frankfort. Next, the large house built by Wilkinson which later became the "Love Tavern", (unfortunately now replaced, with a marker for the site) housed Prince Louis Phillipe, and a ball was given in his honor. Another party was given there for Aaron Burr on the occasion of his defense by Henry Clay in the original Post Offices and Federal courtroom, when the Grand Jury refused to return an indictment against him - for it was also here, in 1806, that a local newspaper broke the news of the alleged conspiracy with Blennerhassett against the United States.

Throughout the area LaFayette was entertained; at the Bibb house



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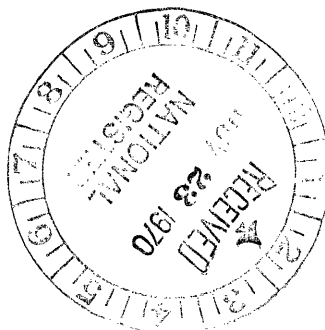
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and the Todd house as well as the Browns. Judge Thomas Todd was married to the sister of Dolley Madison, Lucy Payne, in the first wedding ever performed in the White House and brought her back to Frankfort where later their son, James Madison Todd, rode out with his father and a group of local citizens over a flower bedecked bridge to escort Lafayette to the Corner in Celebrities, though it could scarcely have acquired the name in 1825.

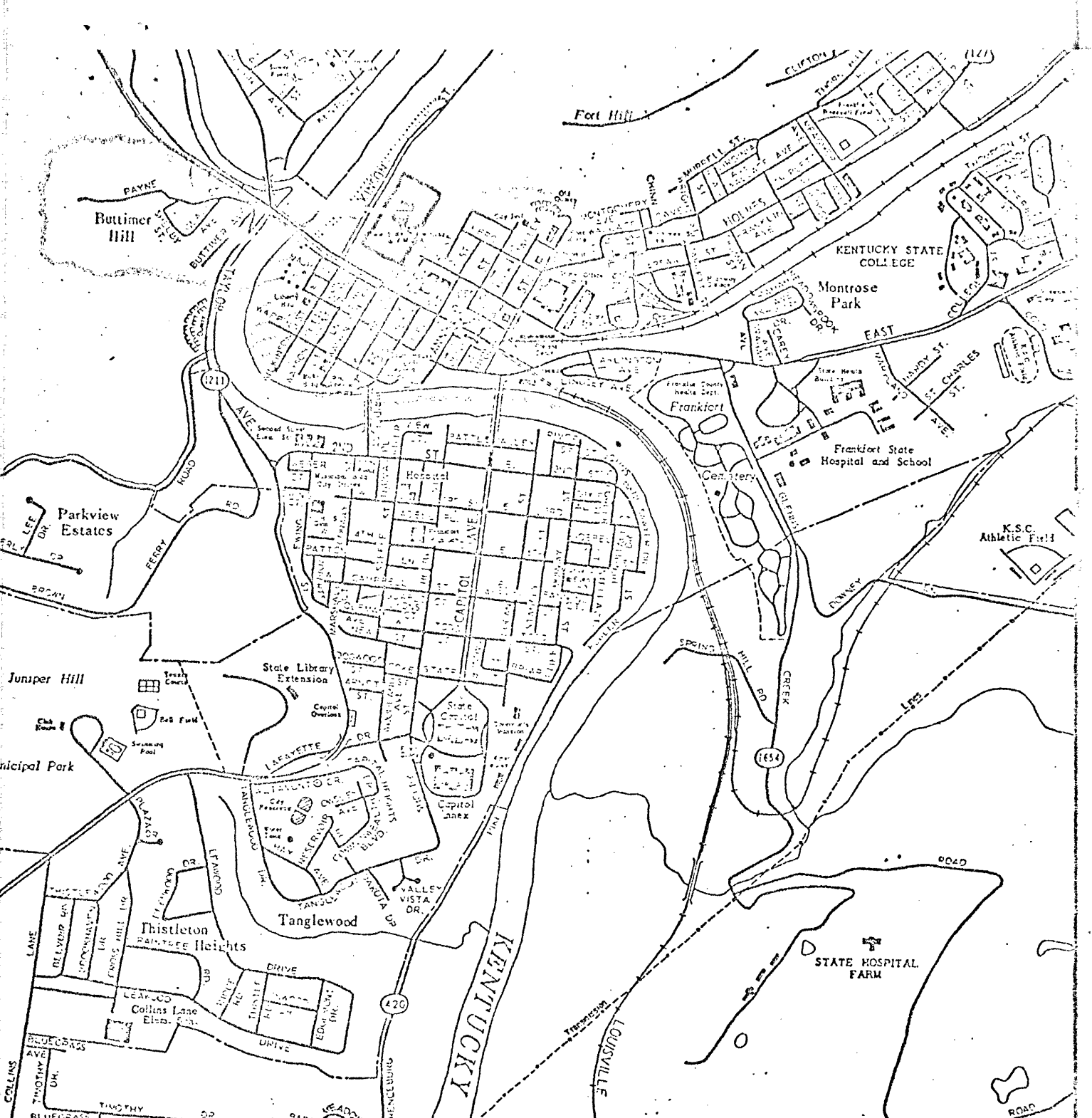
At the Crittenden house at Main and Washington Henry Clay and Daniel Webster were guests and friends of the remarkable Crittenden family, as was President Zachary Taylor, who alighted on the semi-circular carriage step still standing in front of the house.

The illustrious Moorhead family, across the corner, were also makers of Kentucky's and the nation's history, the Metcalfes, the Letchers, the Honorable John Marshall Harlan, prophetically named for the first Chief Justice, who himself became a striking figure of the Supreme Court. He was so commanding in appearance it was said his good looks were worth five thousand dollars a year to his profession.

This can only briefly skim the personages and events of this neighborhood so richly endowed with history and beauty from its beginning until today. This nomination to the National Register will be presented in the Kentucky Heritage Commission House, where one distinguished occupant has followed another, and today used by the Kentucky Heritage Commission active in saving and preserving just such landmarks as it occupies.



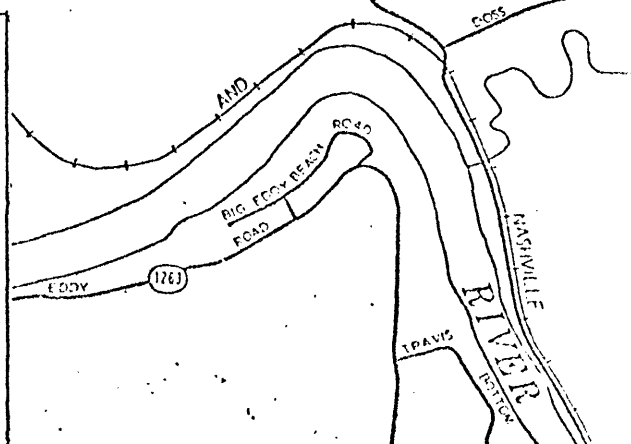




# FRANKFORT

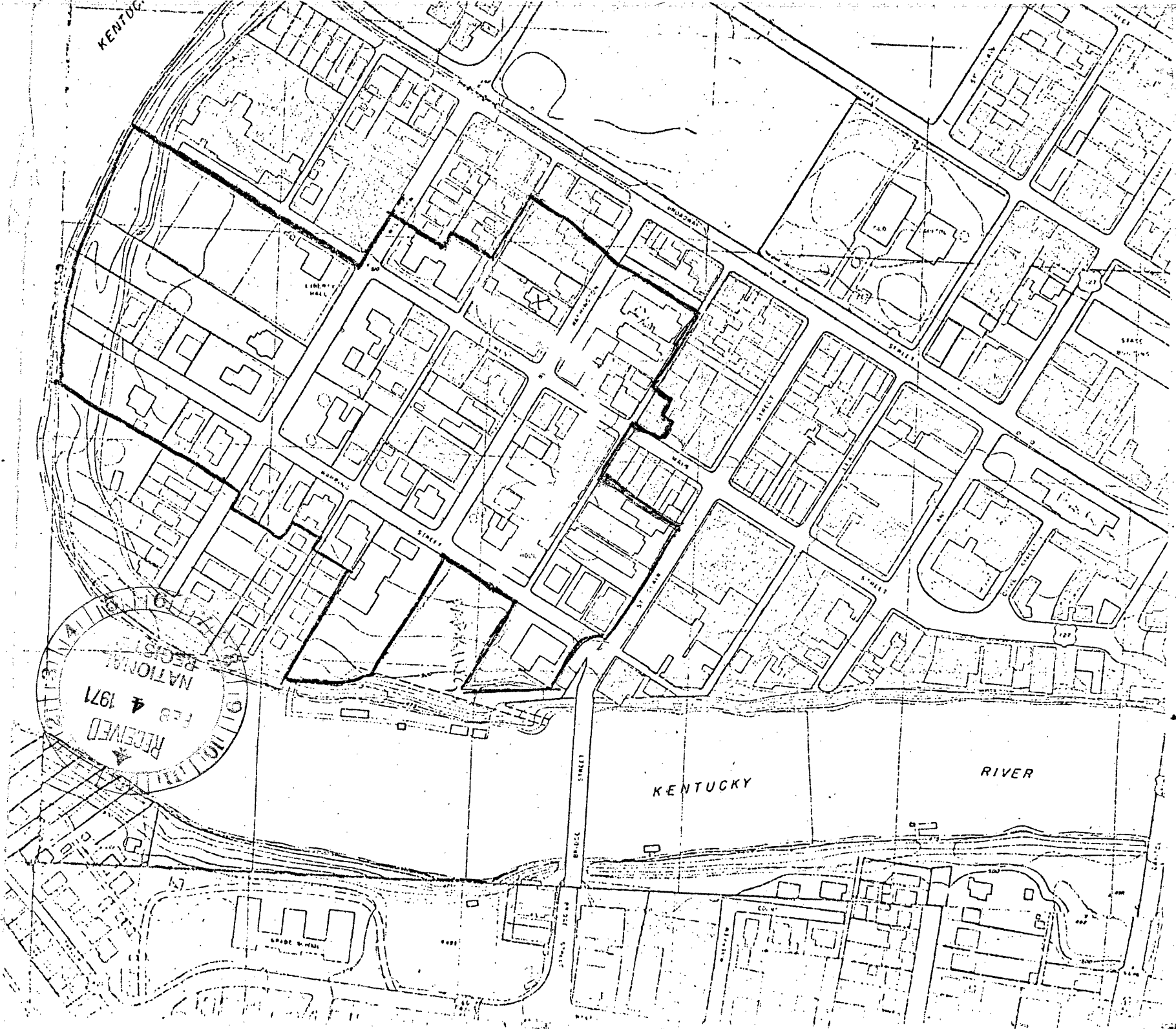
NDP  
 Historic District AND  
 Frankfort Neighborhood Members  
 Business  
 ct  
 Plaza

## ENVIRONS



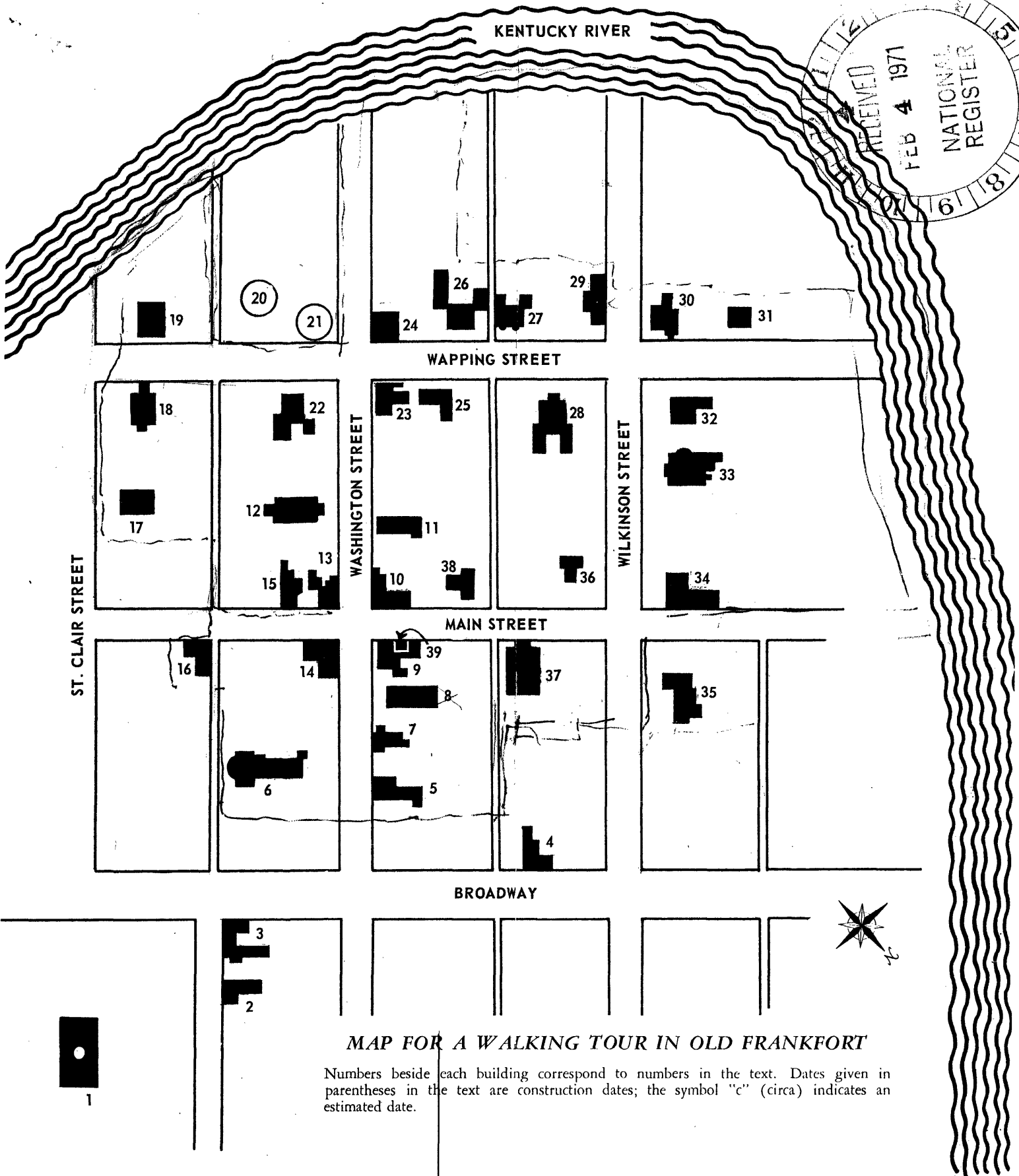
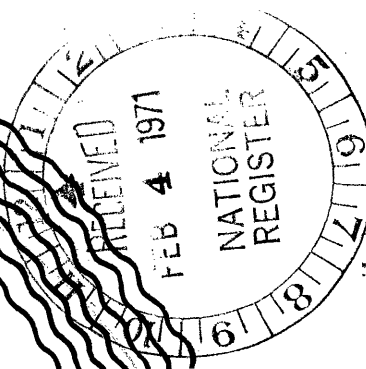
KENTUCKY

NATIONAL ARCHIVES  
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FEB 4 1971



KENTUCKY

RIVER



MAP FOR A WALKING TOUR IN OLD FRANKFORT

Numbers beside each building correspond to numbers in the text. Dates given in parentheses in the text are construction dates; the symbol "c" (circa) indicates an estimated date.

