

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

**DATA SHEET**

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JUN 21 1976  
DATE ENTERED NOV 7 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

**\*\* Airy Castle (G. W. Bowen House)**

AND/OR COMMON

Wyndhurst (Logan English House)

**2 LOCATION**

STREET & NUMBER

LaRue Road, eight miles northeast of Paris

\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

near Paris

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

06

\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Kentucky

CODE

021

COUNTY

Bourbon

CODE

017

**3 CLASSIFICATION**

**CATEGORY**

- DISTRICT
- BUILDING(S)
- STRUCTURE
- SITE
- OBJECT

**OWNERSHIP**

- PUBLIC
- PRIVATE
- BOTH
- PUBLIC ACQUISITION**
- IN PROCESS
- BEING CONSIDERED

**STATUS**

- OCCUPIED
- UNOCCUPIED
- WORK IN PROGRESS
- ACCESSIBLE**
- YES: RESTRICTED
- YES: UNRESTRICTED
- NO

**PRESENT USE**

- AGRICULTURE
- COMMERCIAL
- EDUCATIONAL
- ENTERTAINMENT
- GOVERNMENT
- INDUSTRIAL
- MILITARY
- MUSEUM
- PARK
- PRIVATE RESIDENCE
- RELIGIOUS
- SCIENTIFIC
- TRANSPORTATION
- OTHER:

**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

Mrs. Logan English

STREET & NUMBER

LaRue Pike

CITY, TOWN

Paris

\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Kentucky

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Bourbon County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Paris

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, 104 Bridge Street

CITY, TOWN

Frankfort

STATE

Kentucky

## 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input type="checkbox"/> ALTERED	<input type="checkbox"/> MOVED      DATE _____
<input type="checkbox"/> FAIR	<input type="checkbox"/> UNEXPOSED		

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

George W. Bowen located his estate on a 607-acre tract approximately five miles directly north of Paris, county seat of fertile Bourbon County. Although not on a major road, the site falls back to the Kentucky Central (now Louisville & Nashville) Railroad connecting Paris & the central Bluegrass region with Cincinnati, Ohio, and northern Kentucky. Beyond the railroad farther east is a bend of Stoner Creek. Just north of the property is the small junction of Shawhan, listed as "Shawhan Post Office" on the 1882 atlas, which also indicates a tollhouse there; another tollhouse was located just south of the Bowen estate, near Kiser's Station (see the National Register form for the Station, submitted for State approval June 15, 1976). The farmland is still productive in the area, but there is no longer the proliferation of distilleries and warehouses that once characterized the Bourbon County landscape.

Airy Castle is appropriately sited on a gentle hilltop falling off in all directions except across the road to the west. An 1873 account in The True Kentuckian remarked on the beauty of the site and stated that on a clear day the view from the belvedere included both the church spires of Paris to the south and the tall monuments in Battle Grove Cemetery near Cynthiana to the northwest (the cemetery adjacent to Poplar Hill, the John W. Kimbrough House, also being nominated to the Register at this time).

#### Exterior

The Bowen house faces west toward the road, but the north and south facades are almost equally impressive. Only the east side, with the service ell, is clearly subordinate, but it too has its complement of porches: an ornamental but functional double gallery with enclosed staircase. The house is basically square except for the ell on the north side of the eastern elevation. Moreover, the three major facades are centralized, if not all symmetrical. The house has two main stories, on a fairly high basement, with an immense third-story attic. The fine brick walls are unbonded. The foundations are of brick, divided from the first story by a narrow stone water table (brick on the ell).

The eaves project very widely on all sides, with exaggerated returns and continuous movement over the gables. The eaves are supported by extravagantly curved, paired, openwork brackets (again, plainer and single only on the ell). The brackets in turn appear to rest on a band of molding that rises over the heads of the second-story windows, whether straight or arched. The windows of the first floor have similar plastic "labels," but unconnected. There is a wavy band under the eaves at the top of the walls.

(continued)

# 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" 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 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 1872

BUILDER/ARCHITECT G. W. Bowen

## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The imposing Victorian country villa, situated on a rise between LaRue Road and the Kentucky Central Railroad track north of Paris, the county seat, was built in 1872 by George W. Bowen. Bowen, a Civil War veteran, was a prominent Bourbon County landowner, stock grower, and distiller. Airy Castle, as he called the place, is a fine example of a large-scale Italianate villa, reportedly designed by Bowen himself, with a distinctive admixture of French Second Empire and perhaps even English Tudor Revival elements. Although almost symmetrical in plan, the composition is varied picturesquely by means of diversified gables (different on each side), multiple porches, bays, window shapes, and other decorative features. The interior, which includes bold unpainted woodwork, elaborate plaster ceilings, and some original frescoed ceilings, down to the original (and still polished) "German Silver" doorknobs, keyhole escutcheons, and bellpulls, is remarkably intact. Interestingly, a contemporary account of the house includes the names of the workmen responsible for the different aspects of this work. Moreover, a two-story servants' quarters and unusual stable-barn, part of the original complex and shown in a quaint but revealing 1882 lithograph, remain near the house. All this is set in a landscape that is essentially that shown in the lithograph, matured by a century's growth.

George W. Bowen was the subject of a biography in W. H. Perrin's 1882 history of Bourbon County. Not only does this provide virtually all information on Bowen available, but also conveys a vivid sense of his varied interests and activities, and perhaps even of his character.

George W. Bowen, farmer and distiller; P. O. Shawhan; was born Oct. 18, 1828, near Ruddel's Mills, Bourbon County; he is the son of Benjamin and Mary (Current) Bowen, both natives of Bourbon County; two sons and three daughters were born to them, of whom George W. was the oldest son. He received a fair education at the district schools near Ruddel's Mills, and remained with his father until he had grown to man's estate. From 1852 to 1856 he was engaged in the mercantile business in Ruddel's Mills, and then fitted up and run the old Spear's Cotton and Woolen Factory as a flouring mill, which he run [sic] about one year, and then converted

(continued)

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

An Atlas of Bourbon, Clark, Fayette, Jessamine, and Woodford Counties, Ky.

Philadelphia: D. G. Beers & Co., 1877.

Mastin, Bettye Lee. "No Castle in the Air, Airy Castle Got Built." Sunday Herald Leader (Lexington), November 5, 1967.

Perrin, W. H. History of Bourbon, Scott, Harrison, and Nicholas Counties, Kentucky.

Chicago: O. L. Baskin & Co., 1882.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 30 acres } ELL  
 UTM REFERENCES see Nov 1, 1976 letter

A. Latitude 38° 17' 47" Longitude 84° 16' 21"  
 B. Latitude 38° 17' 42" Longitude 84° 16' 23"  
 C. Latitude 38° 17' 42" Longitude 84° 16' 42"  
 D. Latitude 38° 17' 47" Longitude 84° 16' 42"

A	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
STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

# 11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Mary Cronan, Historian/ Walter E. Langsam, Architectural Historian

ORGANIZATION

Kentucky Heritage Commission

DATE

June 1976

STREET & NUMBER

104 Bridge Street

TELEPHONE

502/564-4452

CITY OR TOWN

Frankfort

STATE

Kentucky

# 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

*Eddard W. Melton*

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 6/17/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

ATTEST *[Signature]*  
 DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

DATE 11/9/78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 11.3.78

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The steep roof retains its polychrome slates and a brilliant wrought iron cresting topped with fleur-de-lys. The cresting defines the flat-roofed deck that originally supported the water tank that made indoor plumbing possible. There are four clusters of square chimneys set back from the eaves on the slope of the roof.

The symmetrical west facade has five bays, with the one-story porch across the central three. The central unit of both the facade and the porch project forward, and there are projecting elements set back from the front wall on both the north and south sides, so that there is a steady progression of elements forward and upward toward the center. The wooden porch has chamfered posts on pedestals linked by railings consisting of linked circles. The posts are connected by low pointed arches that evoke the "Tudor" of mid-19th-century cottages. The paired posts flanking the entrance, however, have narrow semicircular arches between. Over the central bay is a segmental pediment with ornamental acroterion in the center. The brackets at the corners of the porch are reduced, single versions of the main cornice's. All five openings on the first story, including the entrance are flat-headed, but the central window over the porch consists of two round-headed openings under a segmental arch with keystone. Above this in the curious broken-peaked gable is a round-arched window with trim echoing that of the porch pediment below. The one-over-one-pane sash is original throughout.

Except for the service ell at its east end and a chimney placed slightly askew, the north facade is also symmetrical, but with the central bay recessed. Two-story square bays project on either side, linked by the one-story porch (off the dining room) in the center. There are paired round-arched windows in the upper stories of the bays, with lozenge-shaped attic windows fitting in the low gables above.

The south facade is somewhat less symmetrical, with a semi-octagonal, one-story bay window of the library at the west end, with two windows above it, and only single windows on the right which is, however, extended by the ends of the rear double galleries, with x-patterned railings. The south porch leading to the side entrance under the main stairs is narrower than the others, with a more pointed arch flanked by playful pendants. The three windows of the bay are round-arched, as are the two above the porch. Above them is a porthole attic window framed by one of the semicircular pediments frequently found in houses of this period in and around Paris.

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Thus, the design of the house provides variations on several conjoint themes, enlivening an essentially four-square block with decorative elements of great plasticity and rhythmic vigor that, at the same time, reflect the interior spaces, if not necessarily functions.

There was a herringbone brick sidewalk all around the house, parts of which remain. Shutters were inside except on the rear ell.

Interior

The interior layout of Bowen's house has the conventional central hall, with the stair-hall perpendicular to it in the center of the south half of the main block. There are three rooms approximately the same size in the corners, but the dining room is larger, with both a square bay window and an entrance onto the north porch. Fireplaces, with superb New Grecian marbled slate mantels, are on the inside walls.

Although the bays provide some variety among the interior spaces, it is the decorations that distinguish the rooms. Several woods--white and black walnut, and ash--are used both in the porches and the downstairs rooms. Upstairs, the pine woodwork is grained in a virtuoso manner to represent a still greater range of woods: poplar, birdseye maple, cherry, with alternating light and dark moldings and panels, different in each room.

The main entrance is particularly impressive. The outside vestibule has a brown and beige tile floor. An elaborate arch has projecting rosettes on the sides, faces on the keystone, and dogs-heads in the corner. Classical egg-and-dart moldings are enlivened with roses. Over the door "G.W.B./owen" is etched in an exquisite panel of fern fronds; similar etched-glass panels frame the side entrance. The arches of the bays in the library on the left of the hall and the formal parlor on the right have frames similar to that of the vestibule, but with female heads on the sides. The arch to the stairhall also has a figural "keystone." The long narrow central hall is divided by a transverse arch with sliding doors and a wide frame with generous curves at the upper corners. All frames, baseboards, and cornice moldings are on a similar ample scale.

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The front part of the central hall has a plaster ceiling border, with curved modillions and a foliate frieze (photo 7). There are lush naturalistic ceiling medallions in the major rooms and superimposed rich cornice moldings. Upstairs cornices were painted black and gold.

Perhaps the most impressive feature of the interior is the newly-rediscovered frescoes on ceilings, upper walls, and under the staircase. According to the 1853 account, these were early works of Guy Leber, an Italian painter and decorator living in Louisville. Delicate geometric patterns in both bright and pastel colors appear.

Characteristic post-Civil War features are everywhere. For instance, there are kerosene lamp sconces on the dining room doorframe in the hall, although acetylene lighting was installed about 1908. The hardware is of German silver throughout. The library has the original red and gold strip carpeting. Much of the original heating, ventilating and plumbing systems has been retained. There are elegant Rococo Revival iron grates in the fireplace openings, although a furnace and steam radiators were installed in 1912. Water from the water tank originally in the roof was pumped by hand from the kitchen. Throughout the house such features have been reverently preserved and, where possible, continue to be utilized.

North of the house and facing the rear ell is the two-story, three-bay brick servants' quarters. It has a low hipped roof on singular paired brackets, flat stone lintels and sills, and a delicate porch with open round arches between the chamfered posts.

Northeast of the house is a handsome barn displayed, like the servants' quarters, on the 1882 view. The fairly large brick structure faces west, with a broad segmental-arched double door under a jerkinheaded gable. The north and south gable ends are also sliced off to create a rather humped profile. Although the fancy bargeboards shown in 1882 are missing, there are remains of the original stalls, feeding arrangements, and other characteristic features still inside. (Only the foundations remain of the round icehouse and rectangular smokehouse east of the mainhouse shown in 1882.)

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the same into a distillery, and has since been operating it successfully.

He entered the Confederate Army in 1862, and was First Lieutenant of Company C., of H. Smith's Regiment, and Buford's Brigade. On the Ohio raid in July, 1863, he was taken prisoner; he was first taken to Johnson Island, where he was held about four weeks, and then sent to Allegheny City, Pa., and there placed with 115 others in the State Penitentiary, remaining in confinement about eight months, and was then released through the influence of friends.

Mr. Bowen now has 670 acres of fine land, well improved, and for the past five years he has devoted much time and study to the breeding of thoroughbred horses, of which he now owns about eighty head. Notable among sales made by him, may be mentioned: Runymede, two years old, bred upon his farm, and sold in 1881 for \$10,000; Wallenstein, sold for \$9,000; Quito and Elias Lawrence, the two for \$5,000. Mr. Bowen now has on hand ten or twelve fine two-year olds, and thirty-seven brood mares. His progress and judgment in breeding have brought him rapidly to the front in this industry.

About 1875 he engaged in the hardware trade in Paris, Ky., under the firm name of Ford & Bowen. In addition to the above, Mr. Bowen owns one-twentieth of a tract of 500,000 acres of mountain land, rich in timber, coal, and iron ore. In the legitimate acquirement of the property mentioned, Mr. Bowen has been entirely dependent upon his own resources; his career only shows what can be attained by well directed diligence, good judgment and economy.

His beautiful residence, a view of which appears in this history [see photo 1], was designed by himself, and built according to his plans. He was married March 23, 1852, near his home, to Miss Lucy J. Wyatt, a native of the same place, and born Feb. 19, 1832, her parents being Fleming R. and Martha (Rogers) Wyatt. They have one son and three daughters living: Warren W., and Callie, now wife of Alexander Keller; G. Ida, now wife of Dr. Arthur Keller; and Miss Belle M. There [sic] eldest son, John T., was killed by cars in 1880 (p. 275).

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In 1888 the property was sold to John and Corrila LaRue, natives of Mason County, Kentucky. John LaRue, together with his sons, John A. and Charles G., had the concession on the mineral water at the Blue Licks resort in nearby Robertson County. LaRue died the day his family moved into the house. His widow and family continued to live there.

The name of the house was changed from Airy Castle to Wyndhurst after the LaRue family purchased the property.

At the death of Corrila LaRue, the house was left to her daughter, Alice. Alice LaRue married Frederick W. Eberhardt, a Baptist minister. Their daughter, Mrs. Logan English, the present owner, is responsible for the extraordinarily unaltered condition of the house and its surroundings.

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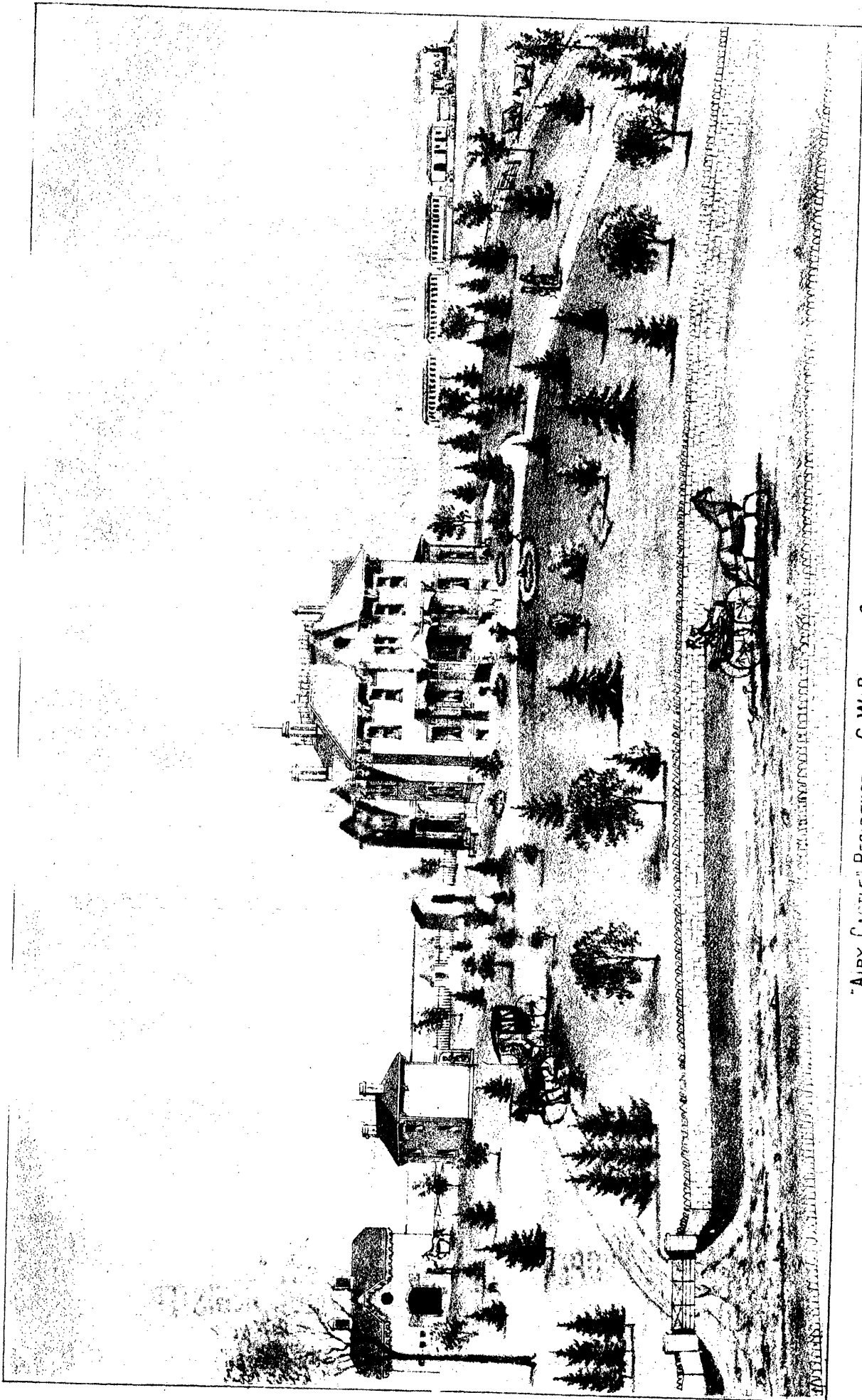
Airy Castle (G. W. Bowen House)

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The nominated property includes thirty acres extending to LaRue Road on the west and to the L & N Railroad tracks to the east. This acreage of land has been nominated because it includes the extensive yard and outbuildings surrounding the house and extends to the Railroad, all of which were important features in 1872 when the house was built, and which remain virtually unchanged.



"AIRY CASTLE" RESIDENCE OF G. W. BOWEN, SHAWHAN, BOURBON CO. KY.

1882

Airy Castle (G. W. Bowen House),  
near Paris, Bourbon County, Ky.

From Perrin, W. H. History  
of Bourbon, Scott, Harrison and

Nicholas Counties, Kentucky.

Chicago: O. L. Baskin & Co., 1882.

Photo 1. Lithograph of G. W. Bowen's  
Estate. Notice the cottage and the  
stables on the left. The proximity

of the railroad tracks can be seen  
on the right.

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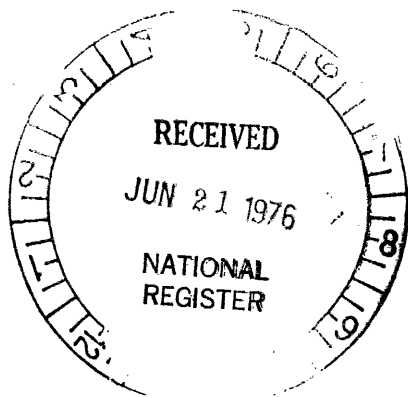
*McLennan*

**PROPERTY OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER**



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near Paris, Bourbon County, Ky.  
An Atlas of Bourbon, Clark,  
Fayette, Jessamine and Woodford  
Counties. Kentucky.  
Philadelphia: D. G. Beers & Co.,  
1877. Airy Castle, just south of  
Shawhan Post Office, is marked in  
red. (Bowen's Distillery on Stoner  
Creek south of the house is also  
marked.)

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