

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

# DATA SHEET

FOR NPS USE ONLY  
RECEIVED JUN 6 1978  
DATE ENTERED JUL 19 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

Cornwall House and Brown Houses

AND/OR COMMON

The McAuley

### 2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

957 South Fourth Street

\_\_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Louisville

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

3 & 4

\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Kentucky

CODE  
021

COUNTY

Jefferson

CODE

111

### 3 CLASSIFICATION

CATEGORY

OWNERSHIP

STATUS

PRESENT USE

DISTRICT

PUBLIC

OCCUPIED

AGRICULTURE

MUSEUM

BUILDING(S)

PRIVATE

UNOCCUPIED

COMMERCIAL

PARK

STRUCTURE

BOTH

WORK IN PROGRESS

EDUCATIONAL

PRIVATE RESIDENCE

SITE

**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**

**ACCESSIBLE**

ENTERTAINMENT

RELIGIOUS

OBJECT

IN PROCESS

YES: RESTRICTED

GOVERNMENT

SCIENTIFIC

BEING CONSIDERED

YES: UNRESTRICTED

INDUSTRIAL

TRANSPORTATION

NO

MILITARY

OTHER:

### 4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME

Sisters of Mercy

STREET & NUMBER

957 South Fourth Street

CITY, TOWN

Louisville,

\_\_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Kentucky

### 5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Jefferson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

Jefferson Street

CITY, TOWN

Louisville,

STATE

Kentucky

### 6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Metropolitan Preservation Plan

DATE

1973

FEDERAL  STATE  COUNTY  LOCAL

DEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

KIPDA

CITY, TOWN

Louisville,

STATE

Kentucky

# 7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION		CHECK ONE	CHECK ONE
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXCELLENT	<input type="checkbox"/> DETERIORATED	<input type="checkbox"/> UNALTERED	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ORIGINAL SITE
<input type="checkbox"/> GOOD	<input type="checkbox"/> RUINS	<input checked="" 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

The McAuley, a residence for college and business women, is located on South Fourth Street approximately three blocks south of Louisville's central business district. It is just north of the Old Louisville Residential District (placed on the National Register in February, 1975) and across Fourth Street from the Louisville War Memorial Auditorium (placed on the National Register in December, 1977).

The McAuley is composed of two nineteenth century mansions which have been joined by a two-story brick passage way. The houses are typical of the elegant residences which lined both sides of Fourth Street in the latter half of the nineteenth century. There are only three surviving nineteenth-century residences in this block.

The northernmost building, No. 957, is a three-story brick structure in a Renaissance Revival style with an unadorned, but elegant facade of light gray limestone. The six bays are arranged symmetrically. A projecting entry of deeply rusticated limestone and paired central windows on the upper stories give a pavilion effect. Outer doors probably led into a vestibule but they have been replaced by modern glass and metal doors shielded by an aluminum awning.

The narrow, double-hung windows have flat, projecting stone cornices. The roof cornice is underscored by plain modillions of white painted wood.

The interior retains many original elements despite some modifications and additions to adapt it to its present use. Some interior details appear to be of a later period, perhaps turn of the century, including a two-story brick bay which creates a wood-paneled inglenook with handsome stained glass windows. A round arched stained glass window is on the stairway and a rose window of stained glass is on the first landing of the massive stairway. Fine woodwork and several etched glass door panels remain on the first story.

The southern house, formerly No. 961, is in a "High Victorian" style and, although dating from the same period as No. 957, it has much richer ornamentation. It is a three-story brick structure with a facade of rusticated limestone of a dark, golden color. There are quoins at the corners.

The three bays are asymmetrically arranged. The segmentally arched windows have bevelled stone surrounds with bas relief flower motifs. The stone sills have small brackets beneath. Paneled double doors of dark wood open into a vestibule. Reeded pilasters at each side of the entry have incised capitals and brackets which support a small balcony with stone balusters and railing. A projecting stone stringcourse divides each story. The roof cornice spans three sides of the building and is underscored by ornately carved, white-painted wood brackets.

Many interior details remain; particularly in the entrance hall and parlors. The ornate stairway and woodwork of walnut are more decorative and architectural than in the other house. A stained glass window with the family crest and initials of the original owner remains above the stairway.

# 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 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 checked="" 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 checked="" 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		

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SPECIFIC DATES	Cornwall House 1878-79	BUILDER/ARCHITECT	Cornwall House-William H. Redin
	Brown House 1879-80		

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## STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The two houses which compose the McAuley are fine examples of late nineteenth-century residential architecture. They are in different styles, one being a rather plain Renaissance Revival structure, and the other is in the more ornate "High Victorian" style. Both are typical of the elegant mansions which were built on Fourth Street in the years after the Civil War when the city was in a period of great expansion. The area south of Broadway on Third and Fourth Streets was then becoming Louisville's most prestigious residential neighborhood. These two houses are among the few surviving residences which date from the 1870s and 1880s--the early years of this southward expansion.

In 1920 the houses were acquired by the Sisters of Mercy for use as a residence for working women. They are still maintained for that purpose.

No. 957 was built in 1878-79 for William Cornwall, Sr., a partner in the firm of Cornwall and Brother, manufacturers of candles and soap. A building permit application, dated July 8, 1878 and signed by William H. Redin, the architect, described the structure to be erected as a three-story brick and stone dwelling containing seventeen rooms and costing \$10,000. Cornwall was first listed at this location in the 1880 city directory.

William Cornwall was born in Ireland and moved with his parents to Lexington, Kentucky in 1826. He graduated from Transylvania College in 1834 and in 1838 he and his brother, John Cornwall, established a lard oil and candle manufactory known as Cornwall and Brother. In 1844 the firm was moved to Louisville and located at Preston and Washington Streets.

The company prospered under the direction of William Cornwall, who kept abreast of the newest mechanical and chemical advances in his field and was quick to apply them to the business. By the 1880s the company was widely known for its superior brands of candles, which were shipped throughout the country, and its laundry and toilet soaps. At the New Orleans Exposition of 1883, Cornwall and Brother received the highest award for their "National" brand of laundry soap.

William Cornwall was married to Mary Baldwin, of Lexington, who died in 1870. In 1875 he married Eliza Booker of Louisville. He had two sons, William, Jr., and Aaron, and a daughter, Sally Hill. After his brother's death, his sons became associated with the firm.

# 9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Allison, Young E. The City of Louisville and a Glimpse of Kentucky.  
 Louisville: 1887, p. 80.

"A Round of Gossip." The Critic, 8 March 1891.

"Big Failure." The (Louisville) Courier-Journal, 4 March 1891.

# 10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY Approx. 1/2 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A 16 608600 4232920  
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
 C         

B           
 ZONE EASTING NORTHING  
 D         

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Eighth City District  
 Block 29 F  
 Lot 141

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 Jean Kinsman, Research Assistant

April 10, 1978  
DATE

ORGANIZATION

Landmarks Commission

587-3501  
TELEPHONE

STREET & NUMBER

727 West Main Street

CITY OR TOWN

Louisville

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

*Cedric W. Nutter*

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 5/25/78

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

*Charles A. Peterson*

DATE 7-19-78

ATTEST Walter C. Cole

MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE 7-5-78

MEMBER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

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Kentucky Survey of Historic Sites 1975, x State, Kentucky Heritage  
Commission, Frankfort, Kentucky

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Despite additions and alterations made to both houses, much of the original fabric remains. In addition to the woodwork, stairways, and art glass, there are some fine mantels and tile work. A cast-iron fence on a limestone curb separates the yard from the sidewalk in front of both houses.

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In March, 1891, the Cornwall firm suffered a financial failure when several local banks sued for payment of notes. Newspaper accounts indicated that, while business had declined for several years, the firm's total assets were greater than its liabilities and William Cornwall, Sr.'s personal assets were great enough to cover the indebtedness. Both The Critic and The Commercial reported that the assignment could have been averted had William Cornwall, Sr., not been prevented from selling certain real estate holdings by "unfortunate family matters." These matters were never discussed in the press, but there was speculation that William Cornwall, Jr.'s heavy investment in railroad and land interests in Eastern Kentucky may have been a factor.

Evidently the company recovered from the failure as it continued in business and was still operating when William Cornwall, Sr., died in 1897. The Cornwall financial troubles may have been a factor in the sale of the Cornwall house in October, 1891.

The purchaser of the Cornwall house was Joseph W. Sprague, an intriguing figure in nineteenth century Louisville society. Sprague, born in Salem, Massachusetts, graduated from Harvard and later came to Louisville to work for the Ohio Falls Car Company in Jeffersonville. By 1868 he was the manager and chief stockholder and in the 1880s he retired from the business a wealthy man. A bachelor, he traveled extensively, collected art, and was well-known for the lavish parties he gave for Louisville debutantes in the 1880s and 1890s. Sprague lived in the Cornwall house for only a year. In December, 1892 he sold the house to Charles W. Gheens. The Critic noted the sale and mentioned a forthcoming public sale of Spragues "art treasures." Sprague evidently lived abroad after 1892. He died in Italy in 1900. Charles W. Gheens, listed in the city directories as "Capitalist" lived in the house for many years.

The other house, formerly No. 961, was built in 1879-80 for John Mason Brown, grandson of Kentucky's first United States Senator, John Brown of "Liberty Hall" in Frankfort. John Mason Brown was born in Frankfort, educated there under B. B. Sayre, and graduated from Yale College in 1856 at the age of nineteen. He studied law in Frankfort with Thomas N. Lindsey and began practice in St. Louis in 1858.

After a period of ill health he went west to live during 1859 and 1860. While there he studied the Blackfoot Indians and in later years published numerous articles about them. He served in the Union Army, becoming a colonel in the 48th Kentucky Mounted Infantry. After the war he settled in Lexington to practice law, and in 1869 he married Mary O. Preston, a daughter of General William Preston. In 1873 the Browns moved to Louisville and he formed a law partnership with William F. Barret. He was later a partner in the firm of Brown, Humphrey and Davie which became one of the city's distinguished law firms. Brown was involved in the establishment of the Louisville parks system and drafted the bill, which was passed by the state Legislature, enabling the city to purchase land for an eastern, a southern and a western park. His avoca-

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tion was history and he wrote and published numerous papers on Kentucky history. He was one of the charter members of the Filson Club. After Brown's death in 1890, the house on Fourth Street was owned by his widow and after her death in 1898 it was sold to Dr. John Ouchterlony, a prominent physician and medical educator. It remained in the Ouchterlony family until 1906 when it was purchased by Dr. John E. Hayes.

In 1920 the Sisters of Mercy bought the two houses to be used as a residence for working women. The history of the McAuley as a residence for young women goes back to 1903 when the Catholic Woman's Club opened a residence for working girls in a house on Walnut Street. Their intent was to provide a place where young women could obtain "safe, convenient lodging, wholesome and nutritious meals at moderate prices." In 1908 they relocated in larger quarters on Walnut Street near Sixth Street.

In 1914 the religious order of the Sisters of Mercy took over operation of the house. The Sisters of Mercy, who had come to Louisville during the Civil War to serve as nurses at the Marine Hospital, operated similar residences in many countries. They changed the name to Visitation Home. The home provided shelter for many women during the 1937 flood, and later was home for women working in Louisville during World War II. Larger quarters were needed and, after a fund-raising campaign in 1919, the former Cornwall and Brown houses on Fourth Street were purchased. In 1912 the Visitation Home moved to these residences.

In 1965 the home was renamed the McAuley, in honor of Catherine McAuley, a wealthy young woman who founded the Sisters of Mercy in Ireland in 1831. Under the sponsorship of the Sisters of Mercy, numerous homes for poor, working girls were founded in Ireland and then in other parts of the world. In recent years the residents of the McAuley have included college students as well as working women.

Interesting architectural similarities exist in the Cornwall and Brown houses and in another house on Fourth Street, No. 1012, built in 1880-1881 for J. W. E. Bayly. It is not known who designed the Brown and Bayly houses. (The Bayly house has been nominated to the National Register and passed the Kentucky Review Board February 2, 1978.)

The architect of the Cornwall house was William H. Redin, an English-born artist and architect, who is known to have worked in Louisville from the mid-nineteenth century until 1891. Early references mention Redin in connection with a "view of Louisville" painting (1846) and the design of Grace Church (1855). The first definite record of Redin's work is the remodelling of Christ Church Cathedral in 1859.



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He also designed the older part of Calvary Episcopal Church (1863), the Anchorage Presbyterian Church (1869), St. James' Church in Pewee Valley, ca. 1868-70, College Street Presbyterian Church (1875), and the tower entrance at Cave Hill Cemetery (1882). The Morton Church Home, St. Anthony's Catholic Church and a Presbyterian Church in Springfield, Kentucky, have been attributed to Redin. He is believed to have designed several stores on Main Street and a number of residences.

The facade of the Cornwall house is much less elaborate than the facades of the Brown and Bayly houses. It resembles the work of Henry Whitestone, Louisville's best-known architect of the late nineteenth century. The limestone on the Cornwall house is extremely light in color. Possibly it came from the White Stone Quarry Company in Bowling Green, Kentucky. According to a brochure of 1872, this quarry was owned by a group of prominent Louisville men. The brochure included testimonial letters from Louisville architects William H. Redin, Henry Whitestone, John Andrewartha, and H. P. Bradshaw who praised the fine quality of this limestone. One of its characteristics was that while gray in color when quarried, it became whiter upon exposure to the air and was often mistaken for marble.

The facade of the Brown house, and of the Bayly house also, is of limestone having a dark golden color. This is typical of what was often called "Pewee Valley Bluestone" which turns a golden color when exposed to sunlight.

The interiors of the Cornwall and Brown houses are very similar in many of the details and they are also similar to the Bayly house interior. The Cornwall house is perhaps less elaborate than the others. All three have massive staircases of carved walnut and elaborate woodwork on the first stories. There are elaborate stained glass windows in each house. The Brown house has a fine stained glass window which includes in its design the Brown family coat-of-arms.

A second architectural firm is known to have worked on the Cornwall house. In 1892, after Joseph W. Sprague had purchased the house, an item in The Inland Architect noted that the firm of Drach and Thomas was making additions and alterations to the residence of J. W. Sprague on Fourth Street near Kentucky. The work was to cost \$2600 and, although it is not known what was done, the work might have been the addition of the two-story bay which contains a fine wood-panelled alcove with stained glass windows.

Because the architect of the Cornwall house is known and because of the similarities in many of the design features, it is tempting to attribute the design of the Brown and Bayly houses to the same architect, William H. Redin.

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However, in the absence of definite documentation, the architect of the Brown house and the Bayly house must remain unknown.

The Cornwall and Brown houses, which are now the McAuley, are excellent examples of late-nineteenth century residential architecture. Their stylistic features add to their importance since the majority of surviving residences in the Old Louisville area are in the Richardsonian Romanesque and Colonial Revival styles.

Although alterations have been made to adapt the houses to their present use, the first stories and entrance halls retain many of the original architectural elements.

These houses are among the few Renaissance Revival and "High Victorian" structures still extant in the Old Louisville area.

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Cornwall House and Brown House  
Louisville, Jefferson County  
Kentucky

Sanborn Map Co., 1972  
No Scale  
Map 2.  
Sites outlined in red.

JUL 19 1978