

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED JAN 9 1980

DATE ENTERED

FEB 20 1980

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS

1 NAME

HISTORIC

Medley House

AND/OR COMMON

Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

1220 Frederica Street

— NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Owensboro

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

2

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Kentucky

CODE

021

COUNTY

Daviness

CODE

059

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. R. Wathen Medley

STREET & NUMBER

1220 Frederica Street

CITY, TOWN

Owensboro

— VICINITY OF

STATE

Kentucky

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,

REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Daviness County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Owensboro

STATE

Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky

DATE

1977 Supplement

 FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN

Frankfort

STATE

Kentucky

7 DESCRIPTION

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

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

The Medley House is situated in the central portion of Owensboro, Kentucky, the seat of government for Daviess County. This Ohio River town, with a population of 79,486 (1970 census), is one of the two major metropolitan centers in western Kentucky, the other being Paducah. Located at 1220 Frederica Street, the Medley House lies at the southern terminus of a short, three-block stretch of late-nineteenth century residences. Frederica Street is Owensboro's major north-south axis, and on both the north and south of this residential enclave are strip developments. Thus, the Medley House serves as a buffer against the incompatible new construction immediately to the south.

The 2 1/2-story frame structure embodies a T-plan (see photo 1) with the major architectural elements being the Gothic and Italianate influenced detailing. Intricate wrought iron, the product of the Springfield Architectural Iron Works, forms a shallow balustrade along the porch roof, above the oriel window on the east facade (see photo 2), and atop the monitor of the hipped roof. Equally elaborate and detailed is the Gothic-style tracery adorning the chamfered porch posts and comprising the bargeboard (see photo 3). Round windows with scrolled frame moldings pierce the south and east gables, and the narrow, single-pane sash windows have bracketed cornice heads and molded casings (see photo 4). A panelled frieze board with brackets encircles the building. The porch and oriel window are heavily bracketed as well. Three panelled brick chimneys rise from the roof.

The tree-shaded yard sits approximately four feet above the sidewalk and is enclosed by a handsome wrought iron fence. The entire property under single ownership is included in the nomination in order to preserve the structure within its setting.

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 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES ca. 1883

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Medley House embodies distinctive design features which make it one of Owensboro's more notable residential structures.¹ Most of the city's historic domestic architecture dates from the last third of the nineteenth century, and of this collection, the Medley house is the best interpretation of the Italianate influence on Owensboro's residential architecture. Specifically, the abundance of elaborate sawn millwork in the Italianate and Gothic design and the intricate wrought iron detailing produce a rich visual composition. Furthermore, the location serves an important function as an anchor against encroaching strip development further south on Frederica Street. The house is also of note because of its long associations with the Medley family, who for many years held one of the most outstanding reputations in the distilling of bourbon whiskey. Although practically all of their distilling interests were sold to larger distillery concerns by 1970, for the greater part of half a century they were probably the best known firm in the western Kentucky area. By 1910, the family business had developed a product which compared favorably with such well-known brands as Barton and Heaven Hill and at that time produced an output which was half that of Glenmore, then the largest producer in the entire state.

For many years three products which have been closely associated with Kentucky are race horses, tobacco, and bourbon whiskey. Of these three, the latter is most distinctive as being uniquely Kentuckian because bourbon whiskey was first made there, received its particular name from the county in which it was first made (Bourbon County, Kentucky), and is still primarily distilled in this area alone. Many distillers claim that one of the chief reasons for this is the excellent limestone water available in Kentucky which helps to give it a distinctive flavor.

The Medley House was built ca. 1883 by George N. Thomson, a tobacconist, and later occupied by Marc Stuart and his father-in-law, the former mayor of Owensboro, Dr. J. H. Hickman. George E. Medley, the first of the Medleys to operate in Owensboro, bought it in 1910. It has remained in the possession and occupancy of this family since that time.

(continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Kroll, Harry Harrison. Bluegrass, Belles, and Bourbon: A Pictorial History of Whiskey in Kentucky. New York: A.S. Barnes and Co., 1967.

Medley, R. Wathen. "History of Medley Property at 1220 Frederica Street from 1883 to 1973." Unpublished manuscript, 1973.

UTM NOT VERIFIED

(continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY approx. 2 acres

QUADRANGLE NAME Owensboro East

QUADRANGLE SCALE 1:24000

UTM REFERENCES

A 16 490510 41791050

B

C

D

E

F

G

H

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

Rectangular lot measuring 171' x 230'

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

STATE	CODE	COUNTY	CODE

11 FORM PREPARED BY

NAME / TITLE

Charlotte Schneider, Architectural Historian; Calvin Jones, Historian

ORGANIZATION

DATE

Kentucky Heritage Commission

December 1979

STREET & NUMBER

TELEPHONE

104 Bridge Street

564-3741

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

Frankfort

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

Edward W. Melton

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 12-19-79

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

W. Ray Luce

DATE 2/20/80

ATTEST

Kevin O'Connell
CHIEF OF REGISTRATION

DATE 2/19/80

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Medley House, Daviess County, Kentucky

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The Medley family has produced several generations of skilled craftsmen and entrepreneurs who have distilled bourbon whiskey in Kentucky. The first was John Medley (1767-1814) who moved to Kentucky in 1800 from St. Mary's County, Maryland. After his death his operations in central Kentucky were continued by his sons Thomas Medley and John Philip Medley. Thomas Medley's youngest child, William Medley, joined them in operating their distilling interests in 1832. William's son, George E. Medley, had a heritage of distilling on both sides of his family. After gaining twenty-three years of experience in distilling bourbon whiskey in Nelson County, in 1904 he decided to relocate to Daviess County. Although his firm commenced operations there at that time, George Medley did not move his entire family until 1910 when the house at 1220 Frederica Street was purchased from Dr. James H. Hickman. George Medley's son, Thomas A. Medley, became very successful in Owensboro and by his death in 1940 had continued the development of this operation as one of the most outstanding firms in the state. He left six sons, all of whom were trained as distillers.

Several generations of the Medley Family have lived in the house on Frederica Street in Owensboro and it is still owned today by the wife of the eldest son of Thomas A. Medley, Mrs. R. Wathen Medley.

¹
The house was identified during the course of the comprehensive survey of Daviess County County conducted by the Kentucky Heritage Commission staff in 1977.

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Potter, Hugh O. A History of Owensboro and Daviess County, Kentucky.
Owensboro, Kentucky: Daviess County Historical Society, 1974.