

**United States Department of the Interior
Heritage Conservation and Recreation Service**

**National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form**

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

For HCRS use only

received MAY 27 1982

date entered JUN 29 1982

1. Name

historic Thomas B. Watkins House

and/or common same

2. Location

street & number 1008 South Broadway (at Virginia Avenue) NA not for publication

city, town Lexington NA vicinity of congressional district 6th

state Kentucky code 021 county Fayette code 067

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture <input type="checkbox"/> museum
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commercial <input type="checkbox"/> park
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational <input type="checkbox"/> private residence
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment <input type="checkbox"/> religious
<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u>NA</u> in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government <input type="checkbox"/> scientific
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial <input type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military <input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property

name Thomas Watkins House Partnership

street & number Bluegrass Industrial Park, 1800 Plantside Drive

city, town Louisville NA vicinity of state Kentucky 40299-1975

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Fayette County Courthouse

street & number 215 West Main Street

city, town Lexington state Kentucky 40507

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Kentucky Historic Resources Inventory has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date March 1980 federal state county local

depository for survey records Heritage Division - Kentucky Department of the Arts

city, town Frankfort state Kentucky

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Watkins House, now isolated on fairly large grounds in an area of increasingly mixed use south of downtown Lexington, is a two-story brick T-plan residence with stone lintels, frame porches, and a standing-seam-metal roof that is partially gabled but hipped at the rear. As is typical of the architect's work, the details include Italianate, Gothic Revival, and Eastlake elements, of relatively small scale in this case. Although the trim of the interior (some of it recently removed but replaceable) is consistent, the plan of the house gives it its distinction. The standard T-plan has been expanded in some areas, particularly the "Family Room," as it is designated on the surviving original plan (Photo 10), and the master bedroom above it, along with the adjacent downstairs nursery and bathroom, at the expense of the formal parlor. The public and private spaces, and several intermediary zones, are carefully articulated by archways, placement of doors, and corridors. The architect-builder also provided for his daughter's family several rather advanced structural and functional features.

The Watkins House is set on an ample lot (see Photos 1-4) on the southeast corner of the junction of two major (although small-scale) radial and circumambient thoroughfares south of downtown Lexington. It is located at the crossing of a major radial thoroughfare, South Broadway, and of a secondary cross-street, Virginia Avenue, that connects the University of Kentucky campus with the Red Mile Trotting Track and the Versailles Road on which the Keeneland Race Track is situated. There are a turn-of-the-century residential court to the north of the house, several tobacco or other one-story warehouses (with a railroad cut behind to the east), and access to the Red Mile Trotting Track opposite. The grounds have mostly been cleared, but retain some mature trees, overgrown plantings, terracing around the house, and a peripheral fence. With its gabled pavilions and dormers, brackets, lintels, Italianate porches, and Eastlake gable trim, the house has a nervous, yet vigorous aspect as it rises above the down-sloping grounds and adjacent streets. The present context has made the property all the more a local landmark, especially as few other residential buildings have remained in more than minimal grounds along the "strip" south from the city center to the outskirts.

The Watkins House is in many ways typical of its period, yet has several subtle distinctive features, probably derived from the architect's intimate knowledge of the needs and preferences of the clients, his daughter and son-in-law and their family. Basically a two-story brick T-plan house characteristic of the last third of the 19th century in the Lexington area, the Watkins house seems to have been slightly distorted by functional requirements. This is perhaps best revealed by the plan, which was reproduced by Clay Lancaster before apparently being destroyed with other Watkins-McMurtry family papers (Photo 10).

Although emphasized on the exterior by its slight projection and forward gable (Photo 1), the northwest parlor wing on the left of the entrance is in fact relatively small, reflecting the segregation and formality of the parlor itself, which is not integrated with the rest of the first floor, but separated by the entrance hall on one side and on the other by the stairhall (Photo 5), which runs northward at a right angle to a side entrance facing Virginia Avenue. On the other hand, the "Family Room" (Photo 7) as it is labelled, on the southwest corner, is definitely outsize--the major room in the house, along with the master bedroom above (Photo 8), whose size is perhaps even more startling, particularly in contrast to the slighted two other upstairs bedrooms. There

(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 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 1887-88 **Builder/Architect** John McMurtry, architect and builder

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Thomas B. Watkins House, a two-story brick late Italianate residence, is the most intact and best documented of the later works of John McMurtry (1812-90), Lexington's most prolific 19th century architect-builder. He designed it in 1887, shortly before his death, for his daughter Anne and son-in-law, Thomas B. Watkins, a prosperous shoe merchant and, incidentally, a step-nephew of statesman Henry Clay. Set on an ample lot in a conspicuous location south of downtown Lexington, the Watkins house is essentially intact, both inside and out, in spite of recent neglect, having remained in the Watkins family until 1978. It was built according to plans and drawings which are the most extensive preserved for any of McMurtry's designs, and exhibits several of his characteristically ingenious features, as well as his intimate knowledge of the clients' habits and wishes. The proposed renovation and adaptive use will provide new life for the building, a fine and handsome example of the work of one of the major shapers of Lexington's 19th century built environment.

John McMurtry came to Lexington from Maryland with his family in 1833, when he was 20 years old.¹ For more than half a century he was one of the most active builders and, probably mainly after the Civil War, architects in the central Bluegrass region. He was not an innovator in stylistic terms--he tended to mix generally small-scale elements derived from various 19th century revival styles on each building, favoring, for instance, Gothic trefoil openings with Italianate brackets, and in his later works some Eastlake interior details. He was, however, inventive in terms of structural and functional systems, such as the hollow brick walls and the placement of the downstairs bathroom in the Watkins House, and patented several technological devices himself. All these characteristics are neatly combined in the Watkins House.

As a builder, particularly before the Civil War, McMurtry seems to have been associated with some of the best architects of the period, including not only the brilliant Major Thomas Lewinski of Lexington, but also A. J. Davis of New York, whose important Gothic Villa for Francis Key Hunt, "Loudoun" (now Castlewood) in Lexington McMurtry built shortly after 1850.² McMurtry is believed to have disseminated the Gothic Revival throughout the Bluegrass, utilizing his experience with "Loudoun," as he had perhaps earlier spread the Greek Revival based on the work of Gideon Shryock and, in the 1840s and '50s, as well as after the Civil War, the gradations of Greek, Roman, and Italianate manners introduced and developed by Lewinski. In the 1870s and '80s, although he vehemently protested in the newspapers against the "newfangled Queen Anne craze" (see text on Photos 10 and 11), McMurtry did incorporate Eastlake and even perhaps at the very end slightly Richardsonian elements in his work. Although he generally kept to the townhouse and central-hall-plan types before the Civil War and to the T-plan for residences after the war, there are subtle variations according to site, scale, and the particular needs of the client, as is best represented by the Watkins House, designed and built for his daughter and son-in-law.

9. Major Bibliographical References

ACREAGE NOT VERIFIED
UTM NOT VERIFIED

See continuation sheet.

10. Geographical Data

Acreeage of nominated property .68 acres

Quadrangle name Lexington West, Kentucky

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A

1	6	7	1	8	0	9	1	5	4	1	2	7	1	8	1	5
Zone			Easting						Northing							

B

Zone			Easting						Northing							

C

Zone			Easting						Northing							

D

Zone			Easting						Northing							

E

Zone			Easting						Northing							

F

Zone			Easting						Northing							

G

Zone			Easting						Northing							

H

Zone			Easting						Northing							

Verbal boundary description and justification The boundary, which follows the property line, begins at a point (5, approximately 25 ft. south of the southeast corner of Broadway and Virginia Avenue) and proceeds east along a line 27 ft. to a point (1), then southeast along the northeast property line 200 ft. to a point (2, the east corner of the property)

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries (continued)

state code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Walter E. Langsam Architectural Historian Consultant

organization Lexington-Fayette County Historic Commission date February 1982

street & number 253 Market Street telephone 255-8312

city or town Lexington state Kentucky 40508

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 Mary Connor Spivey

title State Historic Preservation Officer date 5/20/82

For NPS use only

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

William H. Brabson date 6-29-82

Keeper of the National Register

Attest: Carl Dink date 6/28/82

Chief of Registration

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

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Thomas Watkins House
Fayette County, Kentucky

CONTINUATION SHEET

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is however, most unusually, a "Nursery" behind the Family Room, although whether it was intended as a playroom only, or as a sleeping chamber for the children, is unknown. Since, however, the original "Bathroom" is adjacent, it seems likely that the children also slept downstairs.

The dining-room opposite the nursery on the northeast corner of the main block is conventional, although nicely located between the side and back verandas, and with windows on two sides. A door to the dining room under the main stair case leads from the north (probably family) entrance on the plan, but this seems to have been filled in quite early to provide a china closet, lit by one of the sidelights of the side entrance.

The kitchen and service facilities are well-thought-out, with a pantry and back staircase behind the bathroom, a separate lobby behind the dining-room, and pantry behind the dining-room, leading onto the kitchen porch. The kitchen itself has tongue-in-groove wainscoting (Photo 9).

The entire first floor is carefully articulated in terms of public and private zones by the hall system. The front entrance porch (said to have been reduced in size from that shown on the plan because Mrs. Watkins did not want the family room shaded) opens into the formal front hall (Photo 5). This rather wide passage is lit by a window in a canted corner beside the door, which also has a large glass panel. Only the parlor on the left opens (through wide sliding doors) into this public space, which is defined by a broad three-centered arch. Behind the arch is the crosshall containing the stair, with the door to the family room at the south end (right), thereby relating the family living room and the bedrooms upstairs, as well as the nursery, which opens off the family room, with its bathroom. Behind the stairhall is a narrower arch (with McMurtry's typical rounded plaster jambs) which defines the entrance to the dining room on the left, and provides access through a door to the back service hall. This is also somewhat articulated by tongue-in-groove wainscoting and unaligned axes. The three porches also reflect this hierarchy of use.

The second floor seems even more oddly personalized. It consists of only three rooms across the front (see Photos 2-4), with only an attic over the dining room, nursery, and service area. This unfinished attic is reached by the backstairs; in the front corner of it a bathroom with dormer has apparently been inserted. Whether this area was intended to be expanded on future need, or the whole concept was simply designed for maximum show on the front, this arrangement makes a strangely truncated appearance on the back.

The three upstairs bedrooms, opening off a rather wide upper hall (Photo 6), repeat the pattern below, with the huge master bedroom over the family room, a middle-size bedroom over the parlor, and a small one over the front portion of the entrance hall. There are original closets to the left of the fireplace (on the inner wall) of the master bedroom, as well as in the family room below, and left of the dining-room fireplace (see Photos 7 and 8).

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The exterior of the house is also somewhat distinctive, both in its massing, which naturally follows that of the interior, and also in decorative as well as structural features (Photos 1-4). It is constructed of dark red brick, laid in a double-wall system with courses of alternating headers and stretchers between each course of all stretchers; this system, probably first used by McMurtry during the construction of "Loudon" in Castlewood Park in north Lexington in the early 1850s, is shown specifically on the Watkins House plans (Photo 10), and occurs (although seldom with alternate courses) in other McMurtry buildings. The lintels and sills are of sandstone, with Gothic rosettes carved into the ends of the lintels beyond the frames, and two courses of slightly corbelled brick under the sills. The openings in the ell are segmental-arched. (The windows are single-pane sash, perhaps replacing original two-over-two-pane sash.)

Slender paired eave-brackets (see Photo 10) define the bays, with pierced Gothic trim in the front gable, and shallow brackets over the canted corner of the slightly projecting entrance bay. This is accentuated by the single dormer above, which is bracketted and gabled above a continuous cornice. Behind the front block the roof over the first story has a strangely ad hoc quality: a shallow north-south section with long roofs has a frame extension over the backstairs between the front block and the service ell (Photos 2-4). The latter has its own low hipped roof.

The single bay front porch has square wooden posts, delicate early Gothic Revival openwork spandrels, and a dentillated cornice, as does the two-bay north entrance porch; the kitchen porch lacks the cornice, but has similar spandrels, which seem a little old fashioned for the rest of the trim. The front door has a very large pane of glass and handsome Eastlake panels below; the side entrance has a more Italianate character, with a transom and sidelights retaining several panels of brightly colored etched glass. A partial basement is within the rear part of the stone foundations. The chimneys are panelled (although less elaborately than those of some of McMurtry's other later residences), and that on the north side of the parlor is corbelled out below the cornice on the second story (Photo 2).

Structurally the building seems to be quite stable, in spite of decades of minimal occupancy and recent vacancy and vandalism. It is now thoroughly boarded up.

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Among McMurtry's major construction projects were the early Lexington & Ohio railroad station in downtown Lexington (1834), several antebellum churches, Transylvania University's second Medical Hall (1834), the original Lexington Cemetery Gateway (1849-50), the Kentucky School for the Deaf in Danville (1855-57; designed by Lewinski), extensive additions to the Eastern State Lunatic Asylum in Lexington, the old Fayette National Bank Building (1872, with a Mansard roof), Floral Hall in the Red Mile complex (1880), and many large-scale distilleries, warehouses, and livery stables, as well as innumerable residences, some of them of impressive size and concept. Many of these structures he may have designed as well, particularly the more "functional" types and the residences after the war. Owner of a local iron foundry in 1855, McMurtry also was certainly an innovator in the use of castiron--perhaps from a national as well as a local perspective--not only in details such as the pinnacles of Christ Church Episcopal (late 1840s), the Cemetery Gatehouse, and the Gothic villa, "Ingelside" (1852; formerly not far from the Watkins House, with iron hoodmolds as well), but also in full-scale castiron commercial facades such as that of the McAdams & Morford Drugstore Building ("Melodeon Hall"; early 1850s) and the Higgins Block in downtown Lexington (1871; both are listed on the National Register, as are a number of the other buildings mentioned). Thus, in many ways McMurtry was one of the major contributors to the visual, institutional, and functional nature of the city and its surroundings throughout the central two-thirds of the 19th century, and in many respects to the present.

The Watkins House, built in 1887, shortly before his death, summarizes many of the themes of McMurtry's career, as well as having a very personal quality, and reflects the changes that had occurred in his houses since the antebellum period, as Lancaster puts it: "formal symmetry having been replaced by an easy irregularity of plan, monumentality having given way to intimacy--yet without remarkable reduction in overall size--and correct archaeological motifs having been replaced by feely designed details executed simply in wood."

The dwelling was produced for McMurtry's daughter Anne and her husband, Thomas B. Watkins, who had been married in 1876. Watkins was, incidentally, a step-nephew of Henry Clay of "Ashland," and brother-in-law of Lewinski. Watkins was a shoe merchant, dealing in wholesale and retail boots and shoes. In 1892 he was described as having worked in Lexington for some 30 years, for several of the area's major firms. He was associated before 1885 with (Squire) Bassett & (William B.) Emmal. In 1885 Watkins became a partner of George E. Spencer in Watkins, Spencer & Co. (successors to Bassett & Emmal) which had been established in 1858), listed also as manufacturers and jobbers' agents. Thus Watkins was a member of a group of upwardly-mobile wholesale and retail merchants and manufacturers, connected by family and business ties. Watkins was also listed as a deputy sheriff of Fayette County in 1902.

Mrs. Watkins survived her husband by several decades, and the house remained in the family (although seldom occupied since World War II) until 1978. The property has changed hands several times in the last few years, but the new owners propose to

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restore and renovate the residence as office space, an appropriate use considering its location and size.

- 1 For basic information on McMurtry and the Watkins House, see Lancaster, Back Streets and Pine Trees, *passim*, particularly pp. 98-100 (Photos 10 and 11 below). Additional information on McMurtry's architecture and its context can be found in Lancaster's Ante Bellum Houses and Vestiges of the Venerable City, *passim*.
- 2 His relationship to Lewinski is also discussed in Lancaster, "Major Thomas Lewinski: Emigre Architect in Kentucky," Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians, XI, 4 (December 1952), 13-20.
- 3 Patrick A. Snadon, "Bargeboards and Blue Grass"
- 4 Back Streets and Pine Trees, pp. 98-99.
- 5 Lexington Press, 9/28/1876, p. 1, col. 6.
- 6 Lancaster, "Lewinski," p. 13.
- 7 St. Louis Trade Review, p. (Ma). See also Ranck, Guide to Lexington, Kentucky, p. 72; Ranck, Review of Lexington, Kentucky, As She Is, p. 68.

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Lexington-Fayette County Deed and Will Books.

Lexington City Directories.

Lancaster, Clay. Ante Bellum Houses of the Bluegrass. Lexington, Kentucky:
University of Kentucky Press, 1961.

----- Vestiges of the Venerable City. Lexington: Lexington-Fayette
County Historic Commission, 1978.

George W. Ranck. Guide to Lexington, Kentucky. Lexington: Transylvania Printing
Company, 1885.

----- A Review of Lexington, Kentucky, As She Is. New York:
John Lethem, 1887.

1980 Kentucky Historical Resources Inventory Form by Beebe Park.

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then southwest 140 feet to a point (3, the southern corner of the property) then northwest 212 feet to a point (4, the west corner of the property) then 123 feet northeast back to the point of origin (5) thereby incorporating the house and its residential setting. (See Map 2.)

VIRGINIA AV.

16

D.H.

6" W. PIPE

1000

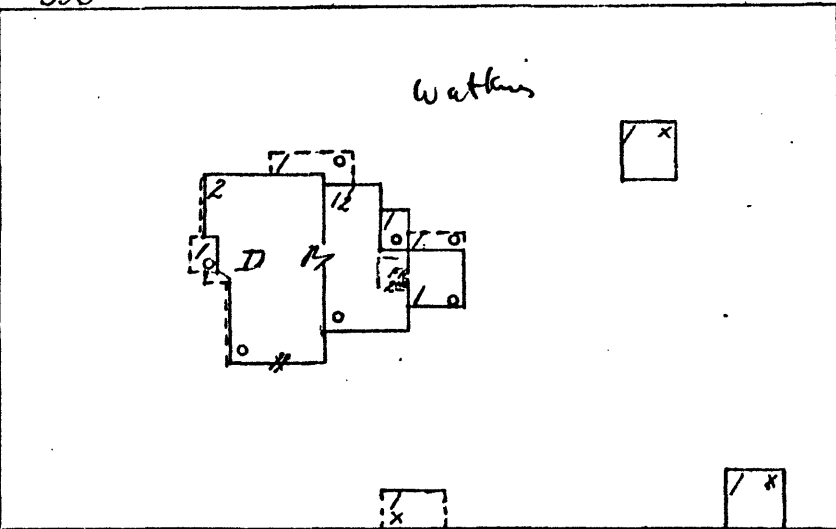
1008

1016

1024

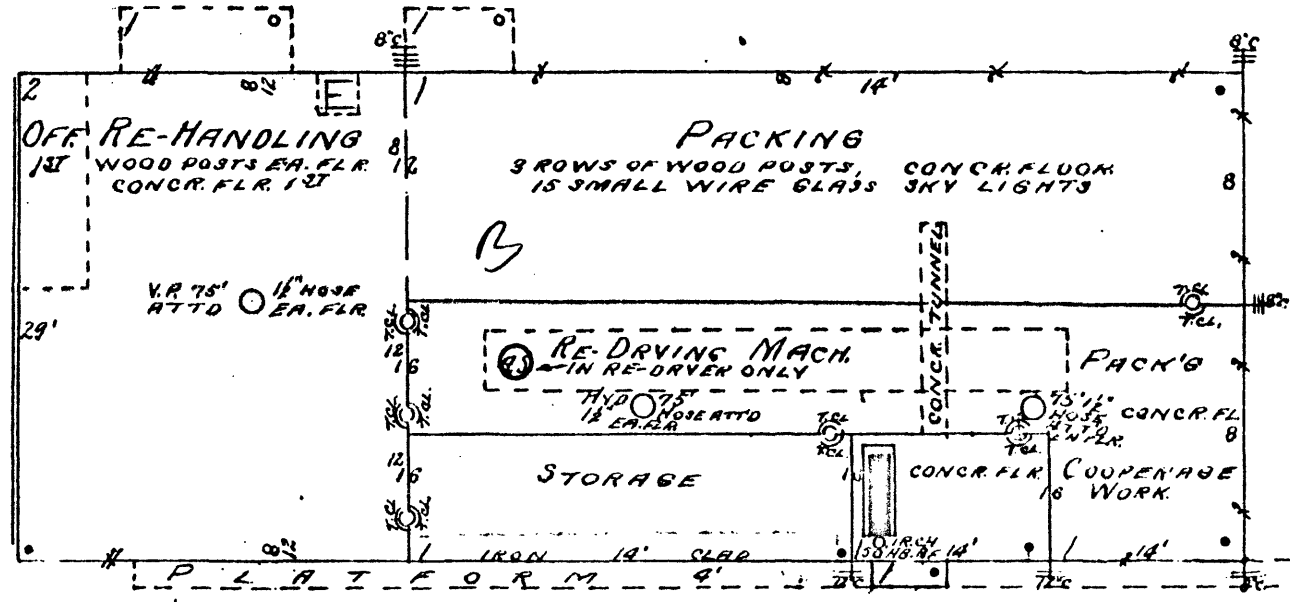
S. B'way

398



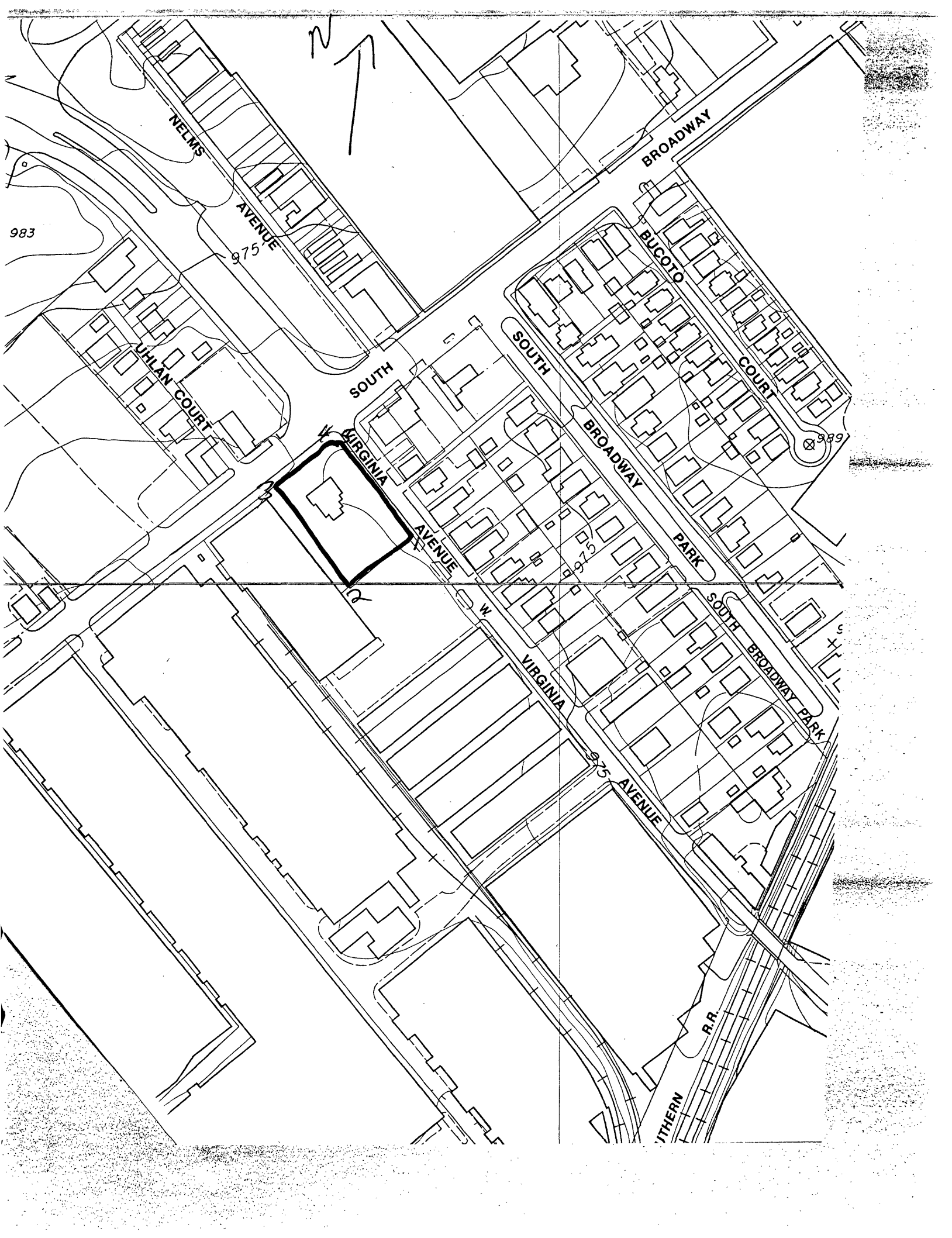
G. F. VAUGHAN TOBACCO CO. TOBACCO RE-HANDLING AND PACKING

NIGHT & SUNDAY WATCHMAN, NEW YORK PORTABLE CLOCK, 8 STATIONS, HOURLY ROUNDS, 2 LINES GRINNELL WET PIPE AUTO. SPRINKLERS IN RE DRYING MACHINE, SUPPLIED BY CITY WATER, ALSO OPEN STEAM JETS IN RE DRYING MACHINES 800' 1/2" NOSE IN 75' LENGTHS ATT'D TO 4" PIPES & HYD. CHEMICAL EXT'RS. DISTROD. HEAT STOVES, LIGHTS, ELECT, FUEL: COAL & NAT'L GAS.



P I L A S T E R S

The Watkins House
Fayette County, Kentucky
Sanborn Insurance Map
1920
Scale: 1" = 50'
Map 1 of 5



983

NELMS AVENUE

975

JULIAN COURT

SOUTH VIRGINIA AVENUE

W VIRGINIA AVENUE

SOUTH BROADWAY

BUCOTO COURT

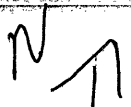
BROADWAY

PARK

SOUTH BROADWAY PARK

SOUTHERN R.R.

989



The Watkins House
Fayette County, Kentucky
Urban County Planning Commission Map
Current
Scale: 1" = 200 '
Map 2 of 5

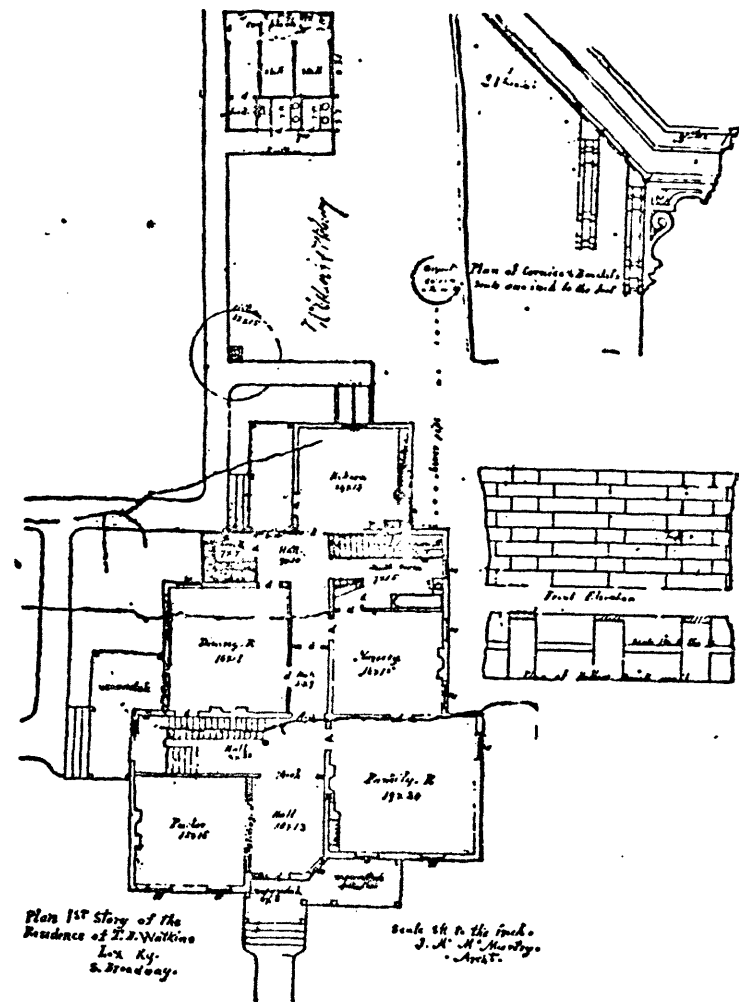
Nominated area shown in Red

have a practical builder's interpretation of the following passage from *Cottage Residences*: "Nearly all the modes of building in modern use may be referred to two original styles, of which they are only modifications or variations, viz: to the Grecian, in which horizontal lines prevail, and to the Gothic, in which vertical lines prevail."¹⁰ Accepting Downing's categories, McMurry considered the distinction between them in structural rather than in visual terms.

John McMurry's disgust at the great amount of work given by Kentuckians to "amateur," immigrant architects emerged in print again and again. At one time he remarked: "I would only need to . . . let the hair grow all over my face and carry marbles in my mouth, so as to mumble broken English and give it out that I was from 'Europe,' which would certainly entitle me in the estimation of our people to equal patronage with the amateur architects."¹¹ Later, he wrote: "The present Queen Ann Style craze is a God-send to amateur architects, thus enabling them to attribute their grossest mistakes and incompetency to the Queen Ann style craze or some other aristocratic name, all of which the people will become ashamed of in less than ten years. Although I have, as before enumerated, planned many hundreds of the best buildings in the State and others out of it as an evidence of my ability as an architect, still Kentucky people call home architects old foggies and cranks, because they insist that people shall stand on their feet instead of on their heads, and restrain their thirst from something new that violates all harmony, fitness and common sense, mechanical rules and experience — thus verifying the proverb that even a prophet is without honor in his own country."¹²

Among the works by the "amateur architects" that McMurry chose for criticism were: the Opera House (erected

1886) on the west side of North Broadway between Short and Second, because of its confused façade and inadequacy



Illus. 46. Plans for the Thomas Watkins House by John McMurry. of fire exits; the buildings of the State College (the nucleus of the University of Kentucky campus), particularly the main (Administration) building, because of a depressed

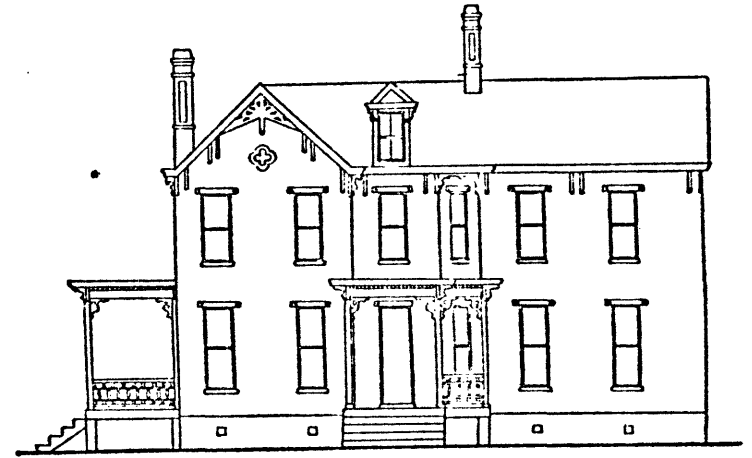
The Watkins House
Fayette County, Kentucky
Lancaster, Back Streets and Pine Trees
1956
Scale: Unknown
Map 4 of 5

central section that McMurry thought should have dominated the pile, and a tower that was out of plumb (the upper portion of which had to be removed shortly afterwards); and a number of business houses, the recurring objection being that pilasters at second story levels were left dangling over plate-glass show windows.¹³

The one working plan drawn by John McMurry that has been preserved is that for the Thomas B. Watkins house on the southeast corner of Virginia Avenue and South Broadway (Illus. 46). To Mrs. Watkins, the architect's daughter, we are indebted for the preservation of this one sheet. To the left, the groundfloor plan of the house is on a blue-green field, the walls being a light red, and the porches, staircase, presses and tub a yellow ochre. The architect's signature is below the righthand corner of the plan. Diagrams of the second story and roof are to the right of the main plan, each scaled eight feet to the inch; and above them are details for the "Best doors & casing," elevation and plan for brickwork, and a cornice with brackets, on a one-inch to a one-foot scale. The size of the sheet is about twenty-two by twenty-six inches.

The house, designed for Thomas and Anne B. McMurry and built on the forty-acre tract near the south limits of Lexington, is composed of a two-story principal mass and a low wing attached to the rear. The entrance porch was made smaller than indicated on the plan, because Mrs. Watkins did not want the window to the family room shaded. The Watkins house, built in 1887, and other McMurry buildings of this period, stand in direct contrast to the architect's ante-bellum work: formal symmetry having been replaced by an easy irregularity of plan, monumentality having given way to intimacy — yet without remarkable reduction in the overall size — and "correct" or archaeolog-

ical motifs having been replaced by freely designed details executed simply in wood (Illus. 47). A hall of modest width



Illus. 47. Elevation of the Thomas Watkins House, as built.

between the principal rooms functions as a reception center, and the staircase is in an extension that leads to the side verandah. The formal parlor is smaller than the family room, indicating the change in the way of life that came about as a result of the Civil War. With the demise of slavery, a greater emphasis was placed on the family unit due to the increased interdependence of its members. Still hanging over the marbleized and stenciled iron mantel in the parlor is a beautiful portrait of Elizabeth Clark McMurry. A narrow corridor separates the dining room and nursery, and connects with the service hall and kitchen. A bathroom with watercloset adjoins the nursery. Three bedrooms, a hall and a storage attic are on the second floor. The attic once contained valuable McMurry mementoes packed in an old carpetbag,¹⁴ that recent investigations on the part of the architect's grandchildren have failed to rediscover.¹⁵ Located about forty feet behind the residence, a small build-

The Watkins House
Fayette County, Kentucky
Lancaster, Back Streets and Pine Trees
1956
Scale: Unknown
Map 5 of 5