

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICENATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED

MAY 27 1976

DATE ENTERED

JUL 13 1976

SEE INSTRUCTIONS IN *HOW TO COMPLETE NATIONAL REGISTER FORMS*
TYPE ALL ENTRIES -- COMPLETE APPLICABLE SECTIONS**1 NAME***
*
HISTORIC

Oxmoor (Bullitt Estate)

AND/OR COMMON

Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER

7500 Shelbyville Road

_ NOT FOR PUBLICATION

CITY, TOWN

Louisville

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

03

_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Kentucky

CODE

021

COUNTY

Jefferson

CODE

111

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. William Marshall Bullitt

STREET & NUMBER

7500 Shelbyville Road

CITY, TOWN

Louisville

_ VICINITY OF

STATE

Kentucky

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTIONCOURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

Jefferson County Courthouse

STREET & NUMBER

2527 West Jefferson Street

CITY, TOWN

Louisville

STATE

Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE

Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky

DATE

1971

_ FEDERAL STATE _ COUNTY _ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS

Kentucky Heritage Commission

CITY, TOWN

104 Bridge Street, Frankfort

STATE

Kentucky

7 DESCRIPTION

CONDITION

EXCELLENT
 GOOD
 FAIR

DETERIORATED
 RUINS
 UNEXPOSED

CHECK ONE

UNALTERED
 ALTERED

CHECK ONE

ORIGINAL SITE
 MOVED DATE _____

DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

Oxmoor is one of the last of the great estates in the Louisville area similar to a Virginia farm or plantation. In spite of the encroachment of a shopping center, and an expressway which split off part of the property, the main house retains an air of isolation. It is approached through an ancient lane of locust trees amid spreading farm fields (see photo 1).

An early log cabin is located on the property, as are a spring house and family cemetery in which are buried all the members of the Bullitt family since Alexander Scott Bullitt and Priscilla Christian Bullitt, first owners of the property, and William Christian who first established the estate in 1784. (see photos 13, 14, and 15).

The oldest part of the house is a white clapboard wing across the back of the house dating from 1785 and built by Alexander Scott Bullitt. It appears as a distinct house and resembles the original Mt. Vernon built in 1743 in Virginia. Both were simple structures with large end chimneys and four windows across the front on the first floor with a plain but handsome doorway between each pair of windows. Oxmoor's original house is one-and-a-half stories high with dormers above the first floor and a projection slanting out over the doorway providing a sort of roof effect over the entrance (see photo 2). Much of the original woodwork, outside as well as in, is intact, including the fireplaces, doors, and walnut stairs leading to the attic. The present dormers were probably altered earlier in this century.

This frame house is joined by a cross-passage to the fine brick addition built around 1800 and now the center block of the main house. It is a long, two-story plain block of refined Federal proportions, both outside and inside. This new wing, containing a broad hall with a parlor on the left and a dining room on the right, is set rather high above a three-room basement. (see photo 3). The two main rooms are symmetrical with one another and have simple, Federal-influenced fireplaces (see photos 8 and 9). Large wall panels were added in the parlor by the present Mrs. William Marshall Bullitt to formalize what she thought to be the less decorative Federal room. The front door has a rectangular lunette and triple sidelights (see sketch 2).

In 1910, William Marshall Bullitt added a second floor to the main brick house as well as a long connecting passage (the kitchen and breakfast room) which joins the central house to a servant's wing. The enlargement of the front of the house enabled him to extend the portico, held up by thin columns. The original doorway was a smaller version of what exists today from the 1910 enlargement (see photo 5).

To balance the entire structure, Bullitt added another wing on the other side of the house in 1927 with a connecting hallway between the main house and the new wing.

(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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION		

SPECIFIC DATES 1787, 1800, 1910, 1927 BUILDER/ARCHITECT Unknown

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Bullitt family has been living at Oxmoor since 1784 when William Christian first established the 1,000-acre estate. It still remains a working farm today. The history of the Bullitt family in Kentucky begins with Captain Thomas Bullitt, a soldier during the French and Indian War and a surveyor who led an expedition party from Virginia to the Falls of the Ohio in 1773 to survey land for a new town site. He is the first man known to have selected the Falls as the site for Louisville. The Bullitt name has remained closely connected with Louisville ever since and five counties have borne the names of his ancestors. The original portion of the house and subsequent additions are a fine example of Federal architecture. A wide range of original outbuildings, including the kitchen, smokehouse, slave quarters, ice house, and springhouse, remain in excellent condition.

Captain Bullitt's nephew, Alexander Scott Bullitt, came to Kentucky from Virginia with the help of his future father-in-law, William Christian, in 1783, and, after living a short time in Shelby County, he bought a farm in Jefferson County, $8\frac{1}{2}$ miles from Louisville on Beargrass Creek. He named the farm Ox Moor after a place mentioned in Lawrence Sterne's Tristram Shandy. In 1785 he married Priscilla Christian, whose father William Christian had built above the spring a log cabin which still exists today.

Two years later they erected a frame house which also still stands and represents one of the three major periods of construction incorporated in the mansion today. Alexander Scott Bullitt became a distinguished member of the State Senate (from the time Kentucky was made a state in 1792), serving 8 years as Speaker of the Senate and 4 years as Lieutenant Governor beginning in 1800. He was also a member of the 1788 and the 1792 conventions, the last one being the convention which framed Kentucky's first constitution. Bullitt served as one of the first trustees of the Jefferson Seminary, the first public educational institution in Louisville.

The house was occupied from 1787 to 1863 when William Christian Bullitt left the estate during the Civil War and moved to Louisville. William C. Bullitt had been admitted to the Bar before he was twenty-one years old but he gave up his practice to become a progressive farmer, using the latest in farm tools and the finest grade of stock. In 1859

(continued)

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Biographical Encyclopedia of Kentucky, 1878 ed. Cincinnati: J. M. Armstrong & Co., pp. 587, 708.

Bullitt, Thomas. My Life at Oxmoor. Louisville: J.P. Morton & Co., 1911.

"Bullitt's Library on Mathematics Valued at 37,000, is Given U. L." Louisville Times (continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 950 acres

UTM REFERENCES

A	1,6	6,2,0	5,6,0	4,2	3,4	2,2,0	B	1,6	6,2,3	0,0,0	4,2	3,4	2,4,0
	ZONE	EASTING		NORTHING				ZONE	EASTING ⁶⁵⁰		NORTHING		
C	1,6	6,2,3	0,0,0	4,2	3,1	5,2,0	D	1,6	6,2,0	6,3,0	4,2	3,1	5,2,0

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

Walter E. Langsam / Louise N. Farnsley

MC
DATE

ORGANIZATION

Kentucky Heritage Commission

STREET & NUMBER

104 Bridge Street

TELEPHONE

502-546-4452 3741

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.

FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVE SIGNATURE

Eldred W. Melton

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE 5/26/76

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

Langsam

DATE 9/13/96

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION

ATTEST

Chadwick

DATE 7-9-76

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

RBR for WJM 7/9/76

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAY 27 1976

DATE ENTERED JUL 13 1976

Oxmoor (Bullitt Estate)

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 7 PAGE 2

The mansion now formed a U-shape. This new brick wing houses Bullitt's famous library collection. A frame addition was later tacked on next to the library to serve as an office and a studio (see photo 6). The wings, although built separately and not having the same proportions, appear to be the same size. Both are elaborate examples of self-conscious Georgian style with French provincial elements particularly evident in the windows and doorways at the front and back of the connecting passages of the house. The library has one story with long windows stretching from the ceiling to the floor whereas the servant's wing has two floors and a basement with much smaller windows. There is a fanlight in the middle of one gable and an elliptical bull's eye window in the library gable, possibly token Federal features relating to the 1800 additions. The entire mansion is covered by a slate roof.

The house is set in superb gardens designed by Marion Coffin. The original garden was lost after the Civil War (see photo 12).

The sense of history at Oxmoor is best revealed by the original auxiliary buildings spread around the house and on the farm dating back to the eighteenth century and remaining intact today. These include a prison with a steel door and bars on the windows, an ice-house 25 feet deep, a smoke house, a kitchen for the slaves, a kitchen and washroom that was used for the main house, slave quarters which once housed some of the 100 slaves who worked on the farm, and a World War I cannon (see photos 15-25.) .

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAY 27 1976

DATE ENTERED JUL 13 1976

Oxmoor (Bullitt Estate)

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 2

he was a delegate to the convention which remodeled the state constitution.

Oxmoor House was closed from 1863 until 1908 when William Marshall Bullitt, the great-grandson of Alexander Scott Bullitt (and also related to Patrick Henry and Chief Justice John Marshall), moved back in. A fine brick front had been added by William C. Bullitt in 1800, but William M. Bullitt extended the house in 1910 and 1927. The architect of the library wing was Burrel Hofman. An architect connected also with the Oxmoor estate was George Herbert Gray who had worked as a draftsman and later as an architect in Louisville before settling in New Haven after the first World War. Thomas Bullitt, William Marshall Bullitt's father, described Oxmoor in his book My Life at Oxmoor (1911):

Oxmoor House was plain, and in these days would be thought small: But it was capable of entertaining, and entertained with generous hospitality more good people than any house that I know of in the present day (p. 31).

Bullitt also had very picturesque memories of the slaves cooking in the kitchen when he was a boy at Oxmoor. In speaking of the main kitchen he said:

This is an institution gone, not to return.... It was a single room of brick....The floor was brick, the hearth was brick.... The fireplace was about 6 feet wide. Only wood was used, but it was the best; seasoned and of all sizes....The skillets, the frying-pans, the ovens, the waffle-irons, the pans, the biscuit beater, and the old Black cook flinging things around and absolute mistress in her domain (p.63).

William Marshall Bullitt was an outstanding lawyer, scholar, and American citizen. The son of Thomas and Annie Bullitt, he was born in 1873 and died October 1957. After being graduated from Princeton and receiving his law degree from the University of Louisville, he joined his father's law firm which was later to become his own. Bullitt was a leading Republican in Kentucky and a nominee for the United States Senate. He argued fifty cases before the Supreme Court concerning anti-trust laws, more cases than any other Kentuckian. In 1912, President Taft appointed him Solicitor General for a year's

(continued)

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAY 27 1976

DATE ENTERED JUL 13 1976

Oxmoor (Bullitt Estate)
CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 8 PAGE 3

term. Bullitt was also Deputy Commissioner of the American Red Cross for France in World War I, Trustee of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, and a Trustee of the American Surety Company of New York.

Bullitt had one of the finest book collections in the country especially in mathematics and Kentucky history; many of his books have been given to the University of Louisville Library.

In conclusion, Oxmoor is a gracious expression of Kentucky life from the pioneer era to the present time. Occupied and carefully preserved by the descendants of the founder for 190 years, it deserves protection from any future commercial encroachment.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

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

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED MAY 27 1976

DATE ENTERED JUL 13 1976

Oxmoor (Bullitt Estate)

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 9 PAGE 2

26 June 1958, William Marshall Bullitt File, Louisville Public Library.

"Bullitt's Life Anything But Dull." Courier-Journal, 13 August 1957. William Marshall Bullitt File, Louisville Public Library.

Bullitt, William Marshall. Bullitt Family Papers (Genealogy). Salt Lake City, Utah: The Geneological Society, R.K. 1584, 1958.

Clippings Concerning William Marshall Bullitt (December 4, 1900-December 15, 1909) University of Kentucky: Photographic Service, n.d.

Collins, Lewis, and Collins, Richard H. History of Kentucky. Vol. I, II. Frankfort: Kentucky Historical Society, 1966.

Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. III, 1929 ed. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, pp. 255-56.

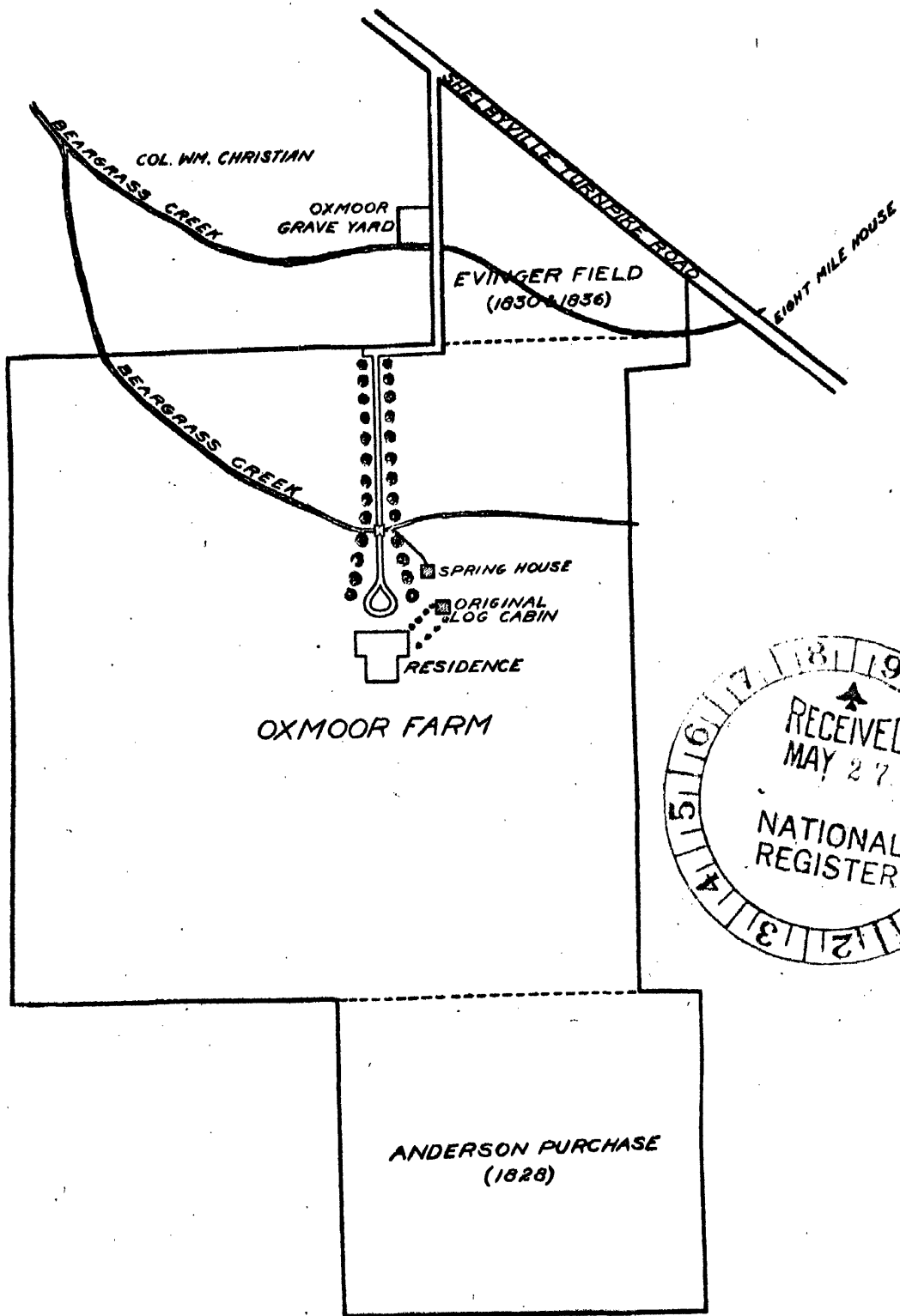
Jennings, Kathleen. Louisville's First Families. Louisville: Standard Printing Co., 1920, pp. 19-23.

Johnston, J. Stoddard, ed. Memorial History of Louisville. Chicago: American Biographical Publishing Co., 1896, Vol. pp. 38, 54, 87, 124, 233, 338, 366. Vol. II, 44.

(Langsam, Walter E.) Metropolitan Preservation Plan. Louisville: Falls of the Ohio Metropolitan Council of Governments, 1973, p. 106.

Thomas, Elizabeth. Old Kentucky Homes and Gardens. Louisville: Standard Printing Co., Inc., 1939.

An estate of hundreds of acres, Oxmoor, in Louisville, Kentucky, still contains a wide range of original outbuildings including the kitchen, smokehouse, slave quarters, ice house, and springhouse, as well as the main house and its subsequent additions. Begun as a small frame house in 1787, a brick addition, built in 1800, is now the center block of the house. The large estate is significant as an example of the agricultural success of early Kentucky settlers.



JUL 13 1976

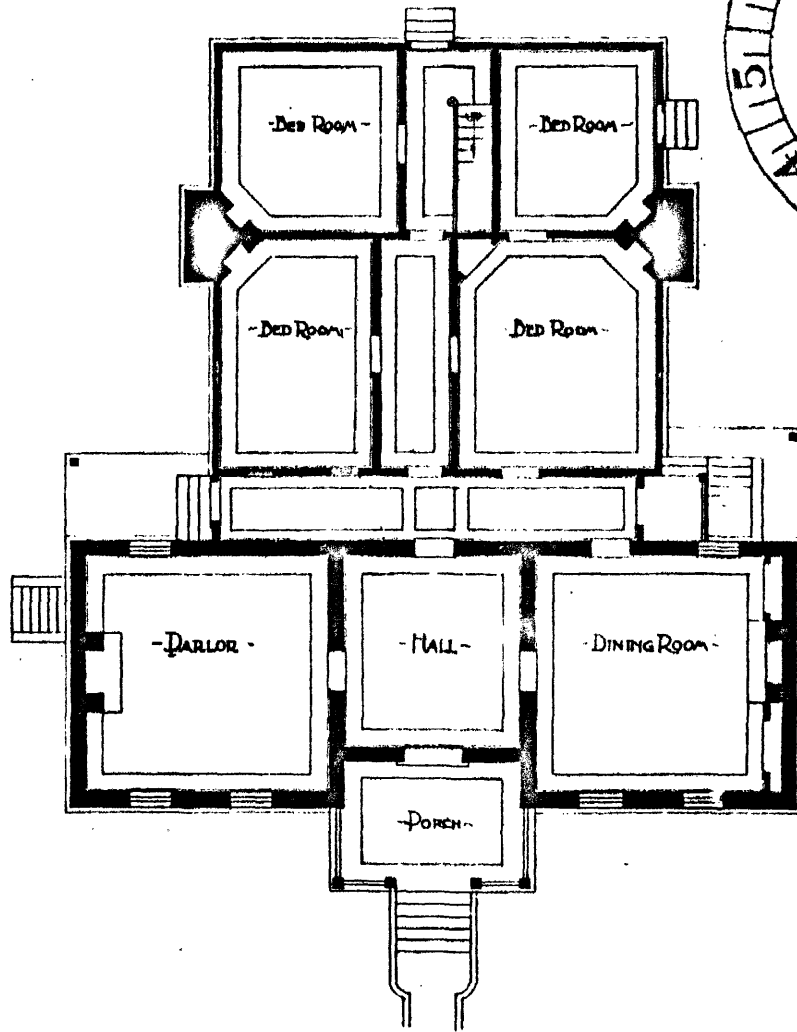
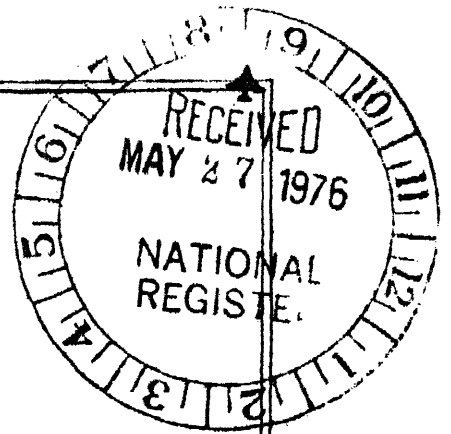
Oxmoor (Bullitt Estate)

Louisville, Kentucky

Thomas Bullitt, My Life at Oxmoor

1869 Farm boundaries

Sketch 1



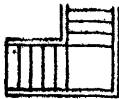
OXMOOR

Home of William Maclure, Sr. 1781-1850
Jefferson County Kentucky.

The Frame Building Facing The Southeast Was Built By
Alexander Scott Bullitt in the Year 1787

The Brick Building Facing The Southwest Was Built By
Wm. C. Bullitt Some Years Later

Measured And Drawn By George Herbert Gray, Archt.
Measured 1906 Drawn 1911



Ground-floor Plan of the Oxmoor Residence.

JUL 13 1976

Oxmoor (Bullitt Estate)
Louisville, Kentucky

Thomas Bullitt 1911
7500 Shelbyville Road, Louisville, Ky.
Sketch 2.
Floor Plan: Original frame house

with 1800 brick addition.

From: My Life at Oxmoor
by Thomas Bullitt

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

Re-notification/80 Amendments

FOR NPS USE ONLY

RECEIVED DEC 31 1980

DATE ENTERED

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

Oxmoor
Jefferson County, Kentucky

CONTINUATION SHEET

ITEM NUMBER 10 PAGE 2

Acreage of nominated property - 940 acres

Quadrangle Name - Jeffersontown, Kentucky

UTM References

- A) 16/621320/4234180
- B) 16/622040/4233740
- C) 16/622970/4232400
- D) 16/622910/4231910
- E) 16/622830/4231720
- F) 16/621550/4231520
- G) 16/621280/4231880
- H) 16/620640/4233100
- I) 16/620620/4233220
- J) 16/620820/4234000
- K) 16/621130/4234180

Verbal Boundary Description

Beginning at a point 100' south of the intersection of the access road to Oxmoor Mall with U.S. 60 (Point A on USGS map) the boundary extends southward along the west side of the access road approximately 1,500'; then turns eastward for approximately 2000'; then extends in a southeasterly direction for 5,300'; then turns in a southwesterly direction 1,600' to the south side of I-64; turning eastward, the line runs along the south side of I-64 800'; then turns south 600'; then turns northwestward 2000'; then turns southwestward 3000'; then turns northwestward 1,400'; then turns northeastward 2,700' to the north side of I-64; then extends along the north side of I-64 and the entrance ramp to I-264/Watterson Expressway to Point H, a distance of about 5000'; then extends northward 100' from the east of the present right-of-way to the exit ramp of I-264 to U.S.60/Shelbyville Road (Point J); then turns northeastwardly about 1,200' 100' south of the intersection of the I-264 exit ramp with US 60; then extends east about 650' to the point of beginning, 100' south of the intersection of the Oxmoor Mall access road with US 60.