

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

For NPS use only
received JAN - 5 1984
date entered

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

1. Name

historic W. L. REEVES HOUSE

and/or common "Liberty Hall"

2. Location

street & number Ky Kentucky Highway 102 southeast of Elkton not for publication

city, town Elkton vicinity of

state Kentucky code 021 county Todd code

3. Classification

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

4. Owner of Property

name John R. & Nancy G. Power

street & number Route #4

city, town Elkton vicinity of state Kentucky

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Todd County Court Clerk's Office

street & number Todd County Courthouse

city, town Elkton state Kentucky

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

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

date 1971 federal state county local

depository for survey records Kentucky Heritage Council

city, town Frankfort 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 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 Willis L. Reeves House, "Liberty Hall," is located on Kentucky Highway 102 immediately southeast of Elkton, the county seat and principle town of Todd County, Kentucky. With a present population of 1,815, Elkton is situated along a historic highway route and near the edge of southwestern Kentucky's most fertile agricultural soils. Liberty Hall stands on a gentle rise, which affords a commanding view of the rich Todd County countryside.

Erected ca.1845, Liberty Hall is constructed of bricks which were made on the grounds. The basement contains three large rooms (each 20 feet square) and a 20' X 14' hall. The basement ceilings are 11 feet high and the walls are of hand-dressed limestone blocks approximately 36" X 9" and 18" thick. Hand-hewn and pegged poplar beams and large stone fireplaces (56" X 60") also grace each of the basement rooms.

The first floor consists of three rooms and a hall, with dimensions matching those of the rooms below. (see plan) All the walls are solid brick, 12" thick, and the floors are of pegged ash. Each room contains a fireplace, though the present mantles date from ca. 1890-1900.

The main stair rises from the hall to a central second floor landing flanked on either side by a 20' square bedroom. At the east end of this floor is located a small attic with a fireplace. This room, which is reached by an enclosed corner stair, occupies the space above what originally served as the dining area.

Located above the second floor is a large attic 64' X 20'. Once again, hand-hewn, pegged rafters remain visible.

Two smaller rooms form a one-story ell at the southwest corner of Liberty Hall. Originally, a porch extended across the rear of the residence and along the east facade of the ell. However, some time prior to 1910, the space was converted to provide a kitchen, bath, and enclosed porch. In 1981, this portion was removed and rebuilt as a new kitchen, den, utility area and bath.

Despite the changes evident on the rear of this handsome brick residence, the original structure has suffered little alteration in either design or detail. Admittedly, the one-story porch which now graces the main (north) facade reflects a later alteration of the original double portico; and yet, the 1890s styling of this element--and the Victorian doorway below--must be viewed as significant as well. The remainder of the house, from the 16/12 window sash to the simple lintels and five-course American bond, further reveal the fine simplicity and integrity of craftsmanship which enhances both the interior and exterior of Liberty Hall. There are no historic outbuildings in or adjacent to the nominated area.

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 checked="" 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 checked="" type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		

Specific dates c. 1845 **Builder/Architect** Attributed to Jesse Russell

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

Liberty Hall, built c.1845 as the focal point of a large antebellum plantation, is significant as an important local expression of Federal vernacular architecture and for its historical association with Willis L. Reeves, one of Todd County's leading nineteenth century landowners and political figures. Born in Kentucky of pioneer Virginia parentage, Willis Reeves wielded considerable influence as a planter, politician and promoter in Elkton and Todd County. As a farmer, Reeves is attributed to have once had as many as 37 different families in his employ, coupled with the fact that in 1850 he was the sixth wealthiest property owner in Todd County.¹ Although best known as a popular Circuit Judge, Reeves also served as County Commissioner during construction of the Todd County Courthouse and was elected to one term in the Kentucky House of Representatives (1871-1873). Along with these achievements Reeves proved influential in other fields, helping organize the Green River Female Academy and serving as a director of the Elkton and Guthrie Railroad Company. Stylistically Liberty Hall represents one of Todd County's prime examples of antebellum rural vernacular architecture possessing integrity of materials and design. Among its most distinctive features are the finely constructed stone foundation and masonry walls, the 16/12 and 12/8 window arrangements with bulls-eye corner blocks and the interior wood fittings. It is the pattern of the corner blocks, coupled with Reeves involvement with the building of the county courthouse [National Register 22 August 1975], that suggest Jesse Russell may have been the builder of Liberty Hall.² Although the original double portico was replaced with a later wooden porch (ca.1890s), Liberty Hall still visually conveys the social and economic standing of the Reeves family, who occupied the estate well into the twentieth century.

¹Marion Williams, The Story of Todd County, Kentucky, 1820-1970. (Nashville: The Parthenon Press, 1972), p.342; U.S., Seventh Census of the United States, 1850, Todd County, Kentucky. The six leading property owners and the value of their holdings in 1850 were:

MARY MERRIWETHER	18,000
D. M. CHRISTIAN	15,000
FRANCIS DUFFEY	15,000
ST.CLAIR LEAVELL	14,250
WILLIS L. REEVES	14,000
JAMES SMALL	12,000

²Russell, a noted Elkton brick mason, utilized the distinctive bulls-eye corner blocks in his design of the Todd County Courthouse. He is listed in the 1850 census as a 40 year old brick mason born in Virginia. According to a centennial history published in 1935, Jesse Russell "erected more buildings . . . than any other man in the town's [Elkton] history, and many of them are still standing--a monument to his efforts." See Todd County: One Hundred Years Ago and Now, Todd County Standard, 1935, p.20.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Interview: Nora Mae Fox. (Resident 1910-1923).

"Semi-Weekly Progress." Todd County, 1902.

Todd County Deed Books.

Williams, Frances Marion, ed. The Story of Todd County, Kentucky 1820-1970. Nashville: The Parthenon Press, 1972.

10. Geographical Data

Acree of nominated property approximately one acre

Quadrangle name Elkton

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A

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Zone Easting Northing

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Zone Easting Northing

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Verbal boundary description and justification The original boundary description is attached and can be justified as the portion of the original Reeves estate which remains contiguous to the residence in location and ownership.

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

state Kentucky code county Todd code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Kit Garrett, Main Street Project Manager [Steve Gordon--December, 1983]

organization Hopkinsville-Christian Co. Pride, Inc. date August 30, 1983

street & number Post Office Box 4096 telephone 502/887-4026

city or town Hopkinsville, 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 *Mary Curren Appel*

title *State Historic Preservation Officer* date *December 23, 1983*

For NPS use only

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

Entered in the
National Register

date *2/2/84*

J. Melvyn Byers
Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date

Chief of Registration

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places
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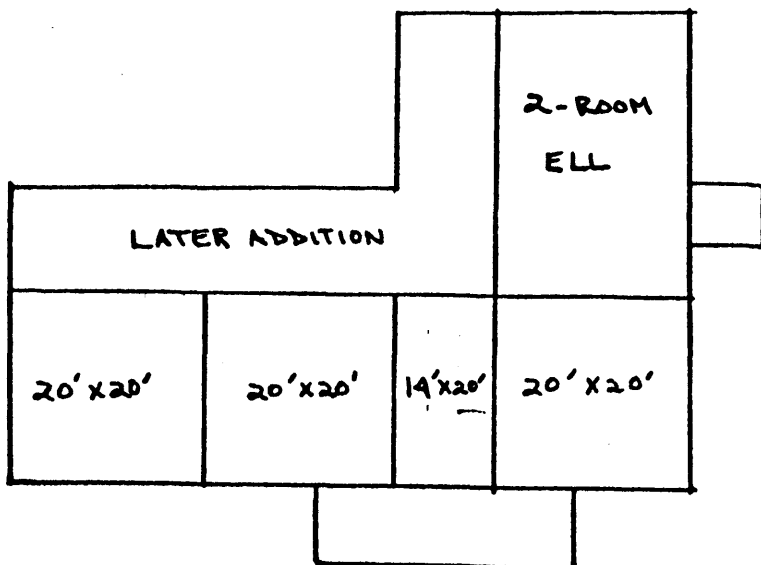
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LIBERTY HALL

Continuation sheet Elkton, Todd Co., Ky.

Item number 7

Page 2



W. L. Reeves House
"Liberty Hall"
Elkton, Todd Co.,
Kentucky

First Floor Plan

Continuation sheet LIBERTY HALL

Item number 10

Page 2

Lying on the East side of the Allensville-Elkton Road, beginning at a point in the Allensville-Elkton Road, running in an eastward direction between Cole estate and the line of Mrs. Ella S. Fox N 82° E 12 poles 8 links; thence S 15° W 30 poles 8 links; thence westwardly in a line parallel to the first call herein S 82° W 12 poles 8 links to the Allensville-Elkton Road; thence in a northerly direction in a line parallel to the second call herein, N 15° E 30 poles 8 links to the point of beginning.

Exception: There is excepted from the above described tract and not hereby conveyed the following parcel of land: The unimproved southern portion of the above tract, beginning at a corner in the east right-of-way line of the Allensville-Elkton Road, Ky. Hwy. 102, near an electric pole, thence S 15° W 12 poles with the said right-of-way line to a corner with Charlie Power in the said Right-of-way; thence with Power N 82° E 12 poles 8 links to another corner with Power; thence again with a line of Power, N 15° E 12 poles to a new corner this day established; thence in a westerly direction to the point of beginning, containing 0.9 or an acre, more or less.

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LIBERTY HALL

Continuation sheet Elkton, Todd Co., Ky.

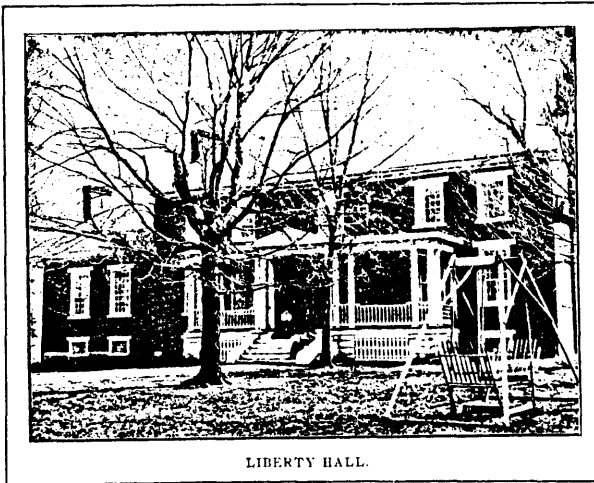
Item number 8

Page 2

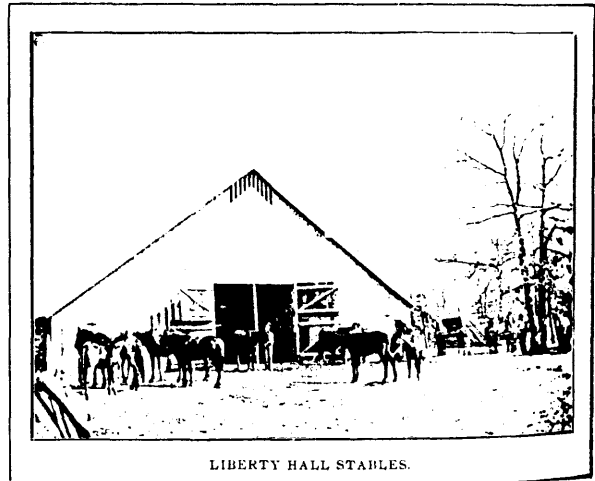
W. H. RUDY

Mr. W. H. Rudy, son-in-law of Judge W. L. Reeves, and manager of Liberty Hall Plantation, is one of Todd County's most active and popular young planters. He wedded a few years since Miss Roxie Reeves, the eldest daughter of Judge and Mrs.

W. L. Reeves, and has since made his home at the historic Reeves homestead in the suburbs of the city, taking control of the large estate. He takes pride in farming and stock raising, and the homestead shows the touch of his taste and energy.



LIBERTY HALL.



LIBERTY HALL STABLES.

LIBERTY HALL, or the W. L. Reeves homestead, is one of the historic homes of Todd County. It has been the home of our popular ex-Circuit Judge and his family for a lifetime, and has always been famous for its Kentucky hospitality.

Source: "SEMI-WEEKLY PROGRESS"
Todd County, 1902.