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United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES
REGISTRATION FORM

1. Name of Property

historic name Richlawn Farm
other names/site number Barker, Ralph M., House; CL-C-189

2. Location

street & number 1705 Highland Ave. not for publication N/A
city or town Carrollton vicinity N/A
state Kentucky code KY county Carroll code 041 zip 41008

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act of 1986, as amended, I hereby certify that this x nomination request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property x meets does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant nationally statewide x locally. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

David L. Morgan David L. Morgan, SHPO / Excutive Director 2-11-2000
Signature of certifying official Date

State Historic Peservation Office/ Kentucky Heritage Council

State or Federal agency and bureau

In my opinion, the property meets does not meet the National Register criteria. (See continuation sheet for additional comments.)

Signature of commenting or other official Date

State or Federal agency and bureau

4. National Park Service Certification

I, hereby certify that this property is:
✓ entered in the National Register Edson H. Beal 3/24/00
See continuation sheet.
determined eligible for the National Register
See continuation sheet.
determined not eligible for the National Register
removed from the National Register
other (explain):

Signature

Date of Action

Richlawn Farm

Name of Property

Carroll, KY

County and State

5. Classification

Ownership of Property	Category of Property	Number of Resources within Property	
		Contributing	Noncontributing
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)		
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Local	<input type="checkbox"/> district	<u> 2 </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> buildings
<input type="checkbox"/> public-State	<input type="checkbox"/> site	<u> 1 </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> sites
<input type="checkbox"/> public-Federal	<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<u> 3 </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> structures
	<input type="checkbox"/> object	<u> </u>	<input type="checkbox"/> objects
		<u> 6 </u>	<u> 0 </u> Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register 0

Name of related multiple property listing NA

6. Function or Use

Historic Functions Domestic/Single Dwelling

Current Functions Domestic/Single Dwelling

7. Description

Architectural Classification Mission/Spanish Colonial Revival; Tudor Revival

Materials

foundation Concrete

roof Ceramic Tile

walls Stucco

other Metal and Wood columns

Narrative Description (begins p. 7-1)

8. Statement of Significance: Applicable National Register Criteria

- A Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- B Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- C Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- D Property has yielded, or is likely to yield information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations

- A owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes.
- B removed from its original location.
- C a birthplace or a grave.
- D a cemetery.
- E a reconstructed building, object, or structure.
- F a commemorative property.
- G less than 50 years of age or achieved significance within the past 50 years.

Richlawn Farm

Name of Property

Carroll, KY

County and State

Areas of Significance _____ **AGRICULTURE** _____
 Period of Significance _____ **1923-1947** _____
 Significant Dates _____ **1923** _____
 Significant Person _____ **Barker, Ralph M.** _____
 Cultural Affiliation _____ **N/A** _____
 Architect/Builder _____ **Hanniford and Sons (architect)** _____
 _____ **Builders unknown** _____

Narrative Statement of Significance (begins p. 8-1)

9. Major Bibliographical References

Previous documentation on file (NPS)

- ___ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested.
- ___ previously listed in the National Register
- ___ previously determined eligible by the National Register
- ___ designated a National Historic Landmark
- ___ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey # _____
- ___ recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____

Primary Location of Additional Data

- State Historic Preservation Office
- ___ Other State agency
- ___ Federal agency
- ___ Local government
- ___ University
- ___ Other

Name of repository: ___ Kentucky Heritage Council _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property **5 acres** _____

UTM References	Zone	Easting	Northing	
Coordinate 1:	16	660 510	4283 520	Carrollton Quad

Verbal Boundary Description and Boundary Justification (see p. 10-1)

11. Form Prepared By

name/title **Donald R. & Ruth Mougey** Organization NA date **7-31-98**
 street & number **1705 Highland Ave.** telephone **(502) 732-5559 (-0204 fax)**
 city or town **Carrollton** state **KY** zip code **41008**

Property Owner

name **Donald and Ruth Mougey**
 street & number **1705 Highland Ave.** telephone **(502) 732-5559**
 city or town **Carrollton** state **KY** zip code **41008**

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Richlawn Farm
Carroll County, KY

Section 7. Description

The R.M. Barker House (CL-C-189) consists of six features: a house, garage, site, stone staircase/ patio, fishpond, and stone fence. Other structures that no longer exist but have been on this site include office building, kennels, wading pool, sunken garden, and extended pergola (enclosed drawing shows current site features). There are no non-contributing structures or buildings on the site. Based on photographs taken for R. M. Barker, all features are known to have existed or were constructed during Ralph Barker's lifetime.

A review of property records from 1789 –1960 shows that the Myron Barker and the R. M. Barker properties were originally about 500+ acres in 1879. However, it had been split, sold and repurchased both after Myron's death in 1910 and during the lifetime of R.M. Barker such that its true dimensions are difficult to describe. However the current 5 acre site is known to have been purchased by R. M. Barker from his sister's estate in 1923.

1. **R.M. Barker home (contributing building)**: is a 2 story, rectangular, stucco-covered house with a gable roof of green glazed clay tile with 6 dormer windows. The house has 2 exterior end chimneys at the east and west sides. Overall, the house exhibits a mixture of various residential revival styles typical of the "creative eclectic" of Charles Barton Kean and C.F.A. Voysey. The mixture of styles contributes an attractive unity without relying on symmetry. It is possible the house was designed to emulate Reynolda, the country home of R. J. Reynolds. The resemblance between the Barker House and Reynolda is strengthened by the knowledge that the builders of the Barker home, William and Adelaide Barker Fisher (R.M. Barker's sister and brother-in-law) were also in the tobacco business with R. M. Barker. The Barkers traveled extensively for their tobacco business and were known to have visited the Winston-Salem area.

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The high pitch roof is a gothic feature, the stucco façade and tile roof, Mediterranean. The fanlight over the entry way, and the palladian style door on the second story are Federal. The grouping of different window types, such as Tudor diamond pane and 6-over-6 casement windows is typical of Arts and Crafts.

The facade has three types of columns (round fluted, square fluted and rectilinear, plain) either free standing or as pilasters in the stucco facade. Later enclosures of the portico and open porch also make what would have been free standing columns appear to be pilasters. The fluted columns are metal and the rectilinear columns are built of tongue and groove wood siding and covered with stucco. The exterior stucco was applied over tongue and grooved wood siding. The stucco is painted white and is in fair condition.

Three screened and glassed-in porches were added to the exterior after the house was built. The first two were done in stucco during Barker's lifetime, with windows suited to the style of the house. The largest porch was built on to the rear of the house, and its roof obscured the fan light over the french doors leading to the porch. The second porch changed the small portico entry to the kitchen to a screened porch with a door at the side of the house. Pictures of the house taken before and after the porch additions date the changes from 1923-1937. After Barker's death in 1952, the large portico on the east side of house was converted to a third porch with jalousie windows. Also the small kitchen entry porch was further altered with jalousie windows and stucco walls replacing the floor-to-ceiling screens.

There are three cut-out balconies on the second story that have french doors. Each of these balconies opens into one of the four corner rooms of the house. The room where the fourth balcony could have been has a window, as this room was for the use of the housekeeper and a balcony would have used up too much of the room space.

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The interior features a central passage with the main rooms on either side (See floor plan). The rooms are large, with many windows that provide a view of the river. The siting of the house allows the river to be viewed from the north, east and west facing rooms. Arts and Crafts style beams in a dark, glossy finish are a prominent feature in the living room and foyer. The decorative cast concrete fireplace and mantel in the living room has a Tudor rose medallion. The style of the rectilinear columns in the facade (narrower at the top than at the base) is repeated in wooden columns that frame the entry way to the living room. French doors provide egress to the porches and to the dining room.

All rooms except the kitchen and butler's pantry have oak hardwood floors laid in a "picture frame" style. The three-quarter inch boards were milled locally and are stamped "Scott Bros. Carrollton, Kentucky". The wood was laid parallel to each wall to outline the first 1 to 2 feet of the flooring, thus forming a border or frame for the rest of the floor, whose boards were laid parallel to the longer walls of the room. The floors are in fair condition and the plaster-lath walls and ceiling are in poor condition.

The house has undergone many changes since Barker's death. Some time during 1950's, a cast-iron railing was added to the flat roof, supported by columns of the front entry-way. A railing of similar style was added to the concrete steps leading to the front entry. The kitchen remodelling in the 1970s, added ceiling beams and replaced the original cabinets and sink. The walls were covered with white marble behind the new cabinets. Square floor tiles now cover the original linoleum. Masonite was applied to the plaster walls and ceiling of the den and the walls of one second floor room. The Masonite was stained a light and dark wood stain in a checkerboard pattern in the ceiling of the den and striped in the second floor room. The second floor room also has an acoustic tile ceiling attached to the original plaster ceiling.

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The only original light fixtures remaining are in the living room, back porch and the housekeeper's room. The other original light fixtures were replaced after Mr. Barker's death.

An elevator for Mr. Barker's use was added in 1950 when his health started to fail. It was placed by the main staircase, which was altered to allow the hall railing to be turned into a gate entry to the elevator. The foundation is concrete and in good condition. The plumbing, fixtures and wiring appear to be original and are in poor operating condition. The original boiler and steam-heat radiators were removed some time in the 1990s and a gas-fired heat stove installed in the living room fireplace.

2. **Garage (contributing building)** designed in American four-square style with a metal roof. It has ca. 2,000 sq. ft with a basement and a second story. Its date of construction has not been determined, and it may have existed before the house. At least two other garages of almost identical style are in Carrollton on properties built 10 to 20 years prior to the Barker house. This building is a stucco structure, similar to the house. It has 2 walk-in coolers that were used to hang meat butchered on the farm. Barker had an office in the building before converting another outbuilding, now gone, for that use. The roof is in poor condition and the windows need re-framing.

3. **Site (contributing)**: Photographs of the site after the house was built show that trees and a rose hedge burned in the fire that destroyed Adelaide and Wm. Fisher's home were removed. The approximate 5 acres of the site were then landscaped with pine, deciduous trees and shrubs, many of which still survive. Ginko, Maple, Dog-wood, Horse-chestnut, White pine and cedars dominated the plantings. One photograph taken after 1937 shows that there was an elaborate Bridal wreath spirea hedge by the front kitchen porch.

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4. **Stone staircase, fountain and patio (contributing structure):** Of the other remaining structures on the site, the most attractive is the limestone staircase including patio and fountain built into the riverbank. The staircase and a lower section of metal steps were used to get down the river and a sandy area called Barker's beach. The stone work is in good structural condition although the fountain mechanism no longer works and the mortar of the brick cap on the patio wall has deteriorated. It was built as part of the stabilization of the riverbank after the 1937 flood.
5. **Fishpond (contributing structure):** The fish pond located to the east of the staircase was said to be connected to the fountain, but was filled in during 1995.
6. **Stone Fence (contributing structure):** There is a stone fence that defines the south boundary of the current 5 acre site of the Barker house. The fence appears to have been built in two styles, one section is typical of early 20th century fence work with large quarried stones and mortar. The earlier part to the east of the newer fence is made of thinner flat stones laid with little mortar into two parallel walls, which were then filled with small stones and rubble. The top of the two walls was then capped with larger flat stones laid flat, not at an angle as is seen with even older style fences. This part of the fence has some damaged areas that need to be rebuilt.

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NARRATIVE STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

The Ralph M. Barker property, (CL-C-189) called Richlawn or Richlawn Farm during Barker's lifetime, meets National Register Criterion B. The property of Richlawn Farm was associated with Ralph Malcolm Barker, a person of major importance in the past history of agriculture and commerce in Carroll County. The R.M. Barker home during his lifetime reflected his wealth and prominence as a local businessman and civic leader. A previous submission to the National Register of Historic Places for the Carrollton Historic District, lists one of his other properties, the Barker Building constructed in 1898 in the designated historical district.¹ The submission notes his importance to Carrollton, where he came to be known as "Mr. Tobacco." This property has been evaluated within the historic context: *Myron and R. M. Barker and Tobacco Commerce in Carroll County, Kentucky, 1865-1952*.

The R. M. Barker house may also meet National Register Criterion C but the evaluation of its local architectural significance was outside the scope of this project. In just a cursory inspection of the local architectural context, several facts are evident. The house (built between 1920-1923) appears to be unique to Carroll County in both its size and eclectic style. A review of the historic buildings survey for Carrollton provided by the Kentucky Heritage Council and a survey of those existing structures by this author notes that the other Carroll County homes built during the time period were: American four square, Victorian or Craftsman-bungalow in style. None had the size (6,000 sq. ft.) or large acreage of landscaping and amenities that the Barker's house did.

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Myron and R.M. Barker and Tobacco Commerce in Carroll County, Kentucky, from 1865 to 1952

Myron Barker's Role in Early Tobacco Commerce

The story of Ralph Barker's role as an important person in Carroll County history, and his success as a businessman, provides a dramatic view of the opportunities that tobacco commerce provided to those who could capitalize on its use. Ralph and his father were amazingly successful in that arena. While Myron closed business in 1902,² and twice during his own career he faced bankruptcy,³ Ralph Barker was able to build on his father's Horatio Alger-like rise from modest beginnings. However, Ralph faced different commercial challenges after the tobacco trusts had broken his father's business. To survive as an independent in an age of conglomerates and vanishing markets took all his skill and knowledge of tobacco commerce. His story also reflects what happened all over the United States to the small independent tobacco business with the rise of the tobacco trusts such as the American Tobacco Company (ATC).

Myron Barker was a truly self-made businessman who recognized the usefulness of white burley tobacco as a Kentucky crop. Born into poverty in 1839 at Penn Yan, New York, the third son of Enoch and Mary Barker, he grew up in a home dedicated to Methodism and plagued by illness and bad luck. His parents were truly devout and their entire lives revolved around church activities.

His father died when Myron was 14, and the family's hardships are described in a moving journal penned by his mother, Mary Barker.⁴ The kindness of neighbors and kin kept them from utter starvation, but they moved often in search of help. From New York, the family traveled to Michigan, Wisconsin, Iowa and finally at the beginning of the Civil War, to Missouri.

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Near the end of the Civil War, Myron found a job in St Louis in a tobacco factory. After just one year, he was paying his family's living expenses, had found jobs for both his brothers and had married Virginia Clark of St. Louis. At the end of two years, he had established his tobacco brokerage in Cincinnati, Ohio where much of the Kentucky crop was brought in hogsheads to the docks. A year later, he had a second tobacco factory in Indianapolis. Mary Barker attributed her son's remarkable success to the workings of Providence and thus does not describe it in greater detail in her journal.

In 1879, Myron moved his family and tobacco handling business to Carroll County, Kentucky. He purchased various farms along the Ohio River and called the accumulated acreage "Richlawn Farm." There he grew tobacco and in Carrollton opened the first of his tobacco handling warehouses. Evidently his methods prepared the harvested tobacco for the manufacturer of chewing tobacco more rapidly and efficiently than other methods in use. He also went about persuading other farmers to switch to the growing and curing of high-grade "white" burley tobacco. He was an agent for Liggett and Meyer of St Louis, at that time, the largest manufacturer of chewing tobacco in the US.⁵

Before the Civil War, tobacco was not a major crop in Kentucky. Hemp was a much more important cash crop and before 1860, of the 40,000 tons produced annually in the United States, 90 percent was raised in Kentucky.⁶ Hemp was primarily used for ships rigging and for baling cotton. The change from hemp rope to wire rigging and the loss of the Southern cotton market caused a drastic drop in the demand for hemp during and after the Civil War. Kentucky farmers searched for another crop to replace hemp and while tobacco had always been grown in Kentucky, the switch to the more marketable white burley type became more profitable for farmers in the area now called the "Burley Belt".⁶

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Kentucky farmers could not compete as easily with farmers in other states because the mechanization of agriculture that occurred in much of the rest of the U.S. required an investment that was beyond the ability of most Kentucky farmers.⁷

In the area now called the Burley Belt, (southern Ohio, southern Indiana and northern Kentucky) Myron Barker was instrumental in encouraging farmers to switch to White Burley.⁸ Burley tobacco agriculture differs from other types, as the leaves are not harvested individually; the cut stalk of leaves is dry cured instead of smoked or heat cured. In 1867, the value of a new crop of "bright" or "white" burley was recognized when it won 1st and 2nd prize at the St. Louis Fair. Because of its ease of cultivation and curing, it came to dominate the farm economy of northern and central Kentucky. There were only 142,000 acres devoted to various types of tobacco in Kentucky in 1866. By 1875 and the advent of Burley, there were 320,000 acres yielding 305,600,00 pounds of Burley worth over \$20,000,000.⁹ The bright golden dried leaf readily absorbs flavorings and became an important ingredient in chewing and pipe tobacco. This made treated Burley into a cheaper alternative to more expensive tobaccos.

Myron Barker continued his remarkable success in the tobacco business and became one the largest employers in Carroll County for about 23 years. His tobacco processing plant and tobacco brokerage made Carrollton an important tobacco market for the region's farmers. The effect on the community can be seen in the census data for the county. Overall, from 1860 to 1890, the state of Kentucky experienced a period stagnant growth, where many counties showed a *drop* in population.⁶ Kentucky was no longer on the pathway of immigrant migration, and the post-Civil war changes in the rural economy had a serious impact on economic opportunities in the state. In Carroll County, before the arrival of Myron Barker, the census for population in 1860 was 5,491 and in 1870 was 5,649. In 1880, (after his arrival) population grew to 8,953, and by 1890 it was 9,266. The

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Carroll County growth stalled in 1900 at 9,825 and fell to 8,110 by 1910, during the difficult times for growers and the independent tobacco businessman.

Buffeted by the changing tobacco market (the price had dropped from 13.7 cents/lb. in 1874 to 6.6 cents by 1894¹²), Myron Barker struggled for some time to maintain his independence. He diversified his interests, becoming involved in many other business opportunities both locally and out-of-state, including mining interests in Colorado. By this time, the powerful American Tobacco Company had swallowed up such large manufacturers as Liggett & Meyer as well as countless small manufacturers, who were been beaten down by the "Plug Wars" when ATC sold plug-chewing tobacco below cost to force out their competition.^{11, 12} In 1902, M. I. Barker sold his business to ATC, closed the doors of his tobacco processing factory, and faced the end of his long association with tobacco commerce.^{2, 3}

Before the rise of ATC, there were many small markets for tobacco, as most American cities and many towns had local tobacco factories. By the 1890s, the consolidation of smaller companies into large combines or "trusts" eliminated many markets and drove the crop prices ever downward.^{11, 12} The "trusts" had powerful advantages, as they held crops in storage for at least 2 or 3 years. They also blended the different kinds of leaf in their products and thus could afford to lower their purchases in a year when the crop yield was poor and the price was higher. By 1890, American Tobacco Co., the trust controlled by James Buchanan Duke, was so strong that it virtually dictated to its many suppliers and distributors (those that it did not own outright) what price would be paid. The trusts did not buy leaf at auction "on the breaks" and those farmers who would not accept the "trust price" could wait a long time--if ever--for a buyer.^{11, 12}

In the short term, this was good for the consumer, as the vertical integration of raw material suppliers, manufacturers and distributors made for stable prices, efficient production, and profits for trust stock

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holders. But for the consumer, whom missed his favorite local brand, and for the grower, whom could not increase his earnings, there was no recourse. The very nature of tobacco culture that made it attractive to Kentucky farmers of both large or small acreage worked against them when the markets were controlled by a few manufacturers.

When the price in the market fell, many farmers increased production hoping to maintain their income. However, without improvements in production efficiency, this strategy served to drive the price down further, by flooding the supply.

The situation caused such hardship and resentment that a form of vigilantism occurred called the Night Riders.⁹ The tobacco farmers tried to band together in a cooperative association and hold tobacco off the market, but turned to violence to force compliance among maverick farmers who sold to the Trust. At the same time, the Night Riders burned the Trust-owned buildings and businesses. Farmers who sold at the trust price might see the Night Riders burn their crop in the barn, or worse. Much of this activity happened in the "Black" tobacco belt of southern Kentucky and northern Tennessee. However, violence and unrest did little for the tobacco farmer or the small private businesses that tried to compete and arrests and sensational trials of the ringleaders completed the tobacco trusts eventual victory.⁶

It took a federal lawsuit based on the Sherman Anti-Trust Act and a US Supreme Court decision (1900 -1910) to break up the ATC monopoly. But nothing could turn back the clock to the days of local tobacco product manufacturer and hundreds of local tobacco markets. By that time, the small independents had sold out, gone bankrupt, or been driven out of business.

Ralph Barker's entry into the Tobacco Business

Ralph Barker worked for his father from about the age of 13, traveling the countryside, visiting tobacco farmers, and meeting tobacco buyers at his father's warehouses. He learned the details of

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tobacco growing from planting to marketing. His father's farm also had fine livestock that Ralph managed as his father's health grew poorer. He was particularly fond of horses and racing and eventually bred and raced horses himself for many years.⁸

As a young man of twenty-four, his first independent business venture was the introduction of telephone services to Carrollton, KY in 1898.⁸ This was considered quite a marvel at the time. The expense of installing the wires and equipment had been thought to be too costly to repay the investment. However the service was immensely popular and Ralph sold it 2 years later at a profit.⁸

It was about this time, that his father was selling his tobacco warehouse business to the "trust". The waxing and waning of Ralph's involvement with tobacco would mirror the commercial complexities of the crop so vital to Kentucky agriculture.

Father and son then opened a canning factory in one of their empty warehouses. The Carrollton Canning Company was still operating in the 1940s, providing farmers a market for their produce and seasonal employment for Carroll County.^{2,3}

In 1904, he then started R.M. Barker & Co. a wholesale liquor business, although as a Methodist, he did not drink liquor. He was treasurer of Barker Packing Company, Secretary of Carrollton-Prestonville Bridge Co. and a director of the Ohio Valley Tractor Co.

In 1909, a year before his father's death, Ralph Barker reopened the tobacco warehouses and re-dryer and established the first loose-leaf sales floor in Carrollton. This was possible because of the great national change about to occur in the tobacco market. After almost 10 years of anti-trust litigation, the American Tobacco Company was being broken up into 5 large companies.^{11,12} The success of the anti-trust laws meant that the new tobacco companies would not be as strong as ATC had been. While this decision stood as a victory over the monied interests, the hundreds of independent businesses taken over by the trusts would not be brought back. Ralph capitalized on the

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need for a local tobacco market but continued to operate the canning business, as bitter experience had shown that total reliance on the profits from tobacco was uncertain.

A study of census data from 1910-1930 shows no correlation between Barker's re-opening of his business and the county census from 1920 through 1930. The count remained below the 1880 levels.¹⁰ However local tax receipts¹³ (for education) showed a dramatic jump from the 1902-03 level of \$2,976.77 (when the plant closed) to \$15,981.69 for 1910-1911. That rise possibly does correlate with improvement in tobacco commerce, so vital to the local economy. From 1911 to 1918 the local tax receipts mirror the rise of tobacco prices. Ralph Barker's re-entry in to the tobacco business took place just in time for him to take advantage of the next evolution in tobacco commerce: the tremendous increase in the popularity of cigarettes.

Cigarettes were originally a minor product of waste tobacco from other tobacco manufacturing. Their popularity gradually increased from the time of the Civil War until the First World War. Around that time, they were actually seen as a somewhat healthier and more sophisticated habit than the more common chewing tobacco. The spitting customary with chewing tobacco was thought to spread diseases such as tuberculosis. Anti-tobacco crusaders actually did not attack the use of cigarettes especially during the First World War. Gen. Pershing claimed that tobacco for the troops was as important to winning the war as the bullets.^{11, 12}

The price of tobacco soared during the war and the government was a major purchaser. Burley tobacco was important in cigarette manufacturing especially after R. J. Reynolds starting making an imitation Turkish tobacco cigarette, "Camels". Again, Burley tobacco's ability to be flavored made it an important ingredient.

During this period, Ralph Barker prospered, and bought more and more land, eventually owning 800 acres in Carroll County. It was about 1923 that he finished building the house that he called Richlawn

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and also at that time began working with Judge Bingham of Louisville on the cooperative program.^{3, 14}

One of his greatest efforts, yet one that appeared to have resulted in failure, was the Burley Tobacco Growers Association, a co-op known locally as "The Pool". Its importance to him is reflected in the fact that at his death, he gave a portion of his wealth away not just solely to family but to people he had worked with 25 years earlier in "The Pool".^{3, 15}

All over the U.S., the Cooperative movement was being touted as a method to protect farmers, improve crop quality, and prevent drastic market changes such as it did in 1920, when the price of tobacco fell precipitously due to the end of the government purchases of tobacco for the military and subsequent overproduction. Previous efforts to form cooperatives in Kentucky to quell production and hold tobacco off the market had failed. Judge Robert W. Bingham of Louisville, influenced by these ideas and guided by Aaron Sapiro (a San Francisco co-op activist), provided the financial backing and his considerable influence to initiate the cooperative effort.¹⁴

Ralph Barker was elected an officer of the Burley Tobacco Growers Association and traveled all over the Burley Belt persuading farmers to join. The pool did stabilize prices for the farmers, and in the opinion of one of Mr. Barker's employees, was thought to have saved this area from the some of the economic hardship and the violence that was seen in other areas of Kentucky.³

However, the tobacco companies could afford to wait out the early efforts of the "Pool." By 1926, The Pool's share of the tobacco crop had dropped to unsustainable levels. The tobacco companies fought back by paying attractive prices to non-co-op members, who received their crop money immediately. By contrast the "Pool" paid growers months after the crop was brought to market. In the end, "the Pool" simply did not have the financial resources to compete with the tobacco companies. The financial failure of the Dark Tobacco

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Association (also helped by Judge Bingham) pulled down the stronger Burley Association and fewer and fewer growers could be persuaded to renew their pool contracts.¹⁴ Once again the independent nature of the small isolated grower worked against a cooperative effort amid rumors that Ralph Barker and other co-op businessmen had unfairly profited. This accusation could have been based on the fact that his warehouses handled and stored the tobacco until a buyer could be found.¹⁴ The Burley co-operative association did lead to a friendship with Judge Bingham and he was a frequent guest in the 1930's at Richlawn.³

Ralph Barker continued his struggle to stay independent of the major tobacco companies. He often traveled, visiting the small independent manufacturers with a suitcase of samples to find a market for his tobacco. The years of the Depression were particularly hard, being one of the times he faced bankruptcy. Last minute loans allowed him pay his creditors and stay in business.³

It was this lifetime struggle in tobacco commerce that brought Ralph Barker prominence not just locally, but statewide and internationally. He testified on tobacco commerce issues before Congress and the Kentucky legislatures as well as playing host to buyers and businessmen from all over the world.

It was activism on the part of men like Ralph Barker that prompted legislation and programs that finally forced changes in the tobacco market. These changes eventually led to the price supports and controlled production that are the hallmark of modern tobacco agriculture. All his life, Ralph Barker spoke out for the independents like himself and the struggle between the growers and manufacturers.

It is also in the local tobacco commerce of Carroll County, that his influence can still be seen. By his energy, and business efforts he established Carrollton as a major site for large scale tobacco processing and auctions that still continues. At the time of his death he either owned outright or had an interest in the 10 warehouses in

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Richlawn Farm
Carroll County, KY

Carrollton, KY. It was then the fifth largest Burley tobacco market in the world, handling over 15 million pounds of tobacco annually.¹⁶

Ralph Barker and Richlawn

The original owners of the site of Richlawn were Adelaide Barker Fisher (Ralph's sister) and her husband W. E. Fisher, who obtained the property in a deed dated March 14, 1906. Their home on the site burned down about 1918 and they selected the new design and began construction around 1920. Adelaide and Ralph were very close, and Ralph was in the tobacco business with his brother-in-law, W. E. Fisher. Before Adelaide died in 1922, Ralph Barker had planned to build a new home on the adjacent acreage that he had already purchased from his mother. However after Adelaide's death the site was sold to Ralph Barker. In 1923 he finished construction and called the home "Richlawn." The Richlawn name comes from the name his father Myron had also given to his home and farm built after his move to Carrollton in 1879.^{3, 17}

Ralph Barker perhaps typified the wealthy, public-spirited citizen of his era. Richlawn, his home from 1923 to his death in 1952 is well documented as an important venue in the social lives of Carroll County residents.^{3, 17, 18} The house and grounds were a center of social activity and public functions, from church picnics to more elaborate festivities. He delighted in elaborate displays at Christmas and the 4th of July that people in 1999 still remember as the high points of their holidays. He was known for charitable works and donations including gifts of land to the county and local organizations.¹⁶ However, he also gave many gifts anonymously, concealing his identity to the recipient until his death. Although he died forty-seven years ago, those living now who knew him still retain the warmest admiration for him, describing him as "the most remarkable man they ever met".³

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Verbal Boundary Description

The area proposed for listing is described as parcel C3-03-44 on the Carroll County Property Valuation Assessor maps. The property stretches from Highland Avenue, at its frontage, to the Ohio River, at the rear of the property. On its west side is property C3-03-43; on the east is a large acreage that belongs to another map series.

Boundary Justification

The area proposed for listing contains the historic building features and designed landscape resources which are most closely identified with the domestic life of Ralph Barker, the important person established as the focus of this nomination form. The relationship of surrounding properties to Barker's productive life was not explored. The area proposed for listing is restricted to that which Barker would have viewed as his home, as distinguished from his work place and locus of income generation. During his lifetime and productive period, some of the surrounding acreage may have been owned and used by him as part of his farming operations. The identity and relationship of those adjacent farms to Barker's significance has not been investigated here.

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Richlawn Farm
Carroll County, KY

PICTURE KEY for R. M. BARKER SUBMISSION

This information is the same for all photographs:

Property: Richlawn Farm

Location: Carroll County, KY

Photographer: Don and Ruth Mougey

Date of Photograph: 1999

Location of Negatives: Photographer's collection, Carroll County, KY

#	Text Reference	Description	Photographer facing
1	C3Si	Front View of site from St R.42	North
2	C1B	South & west view of house	Northeast
3	C1B	East and north view of house	Southwest
4	C2B	West and South view of garage	Northeast
5	C2B	East and North view of garage	Southwest
6	C4S	Stone staircase, patio & fountain pool	North
7	C4S	Stone staircase, patio	West
8	C4S	Stone staircase	South
9	C6S	Stone wall (oldest section)	Northeast
10	C6S	Stone wall (newer section)	Northwest
11	C5S	Site of fishpond (stone & concrete foundation) filled in by previous owner(1995)	East
12	C3Si	Rear view of site (inc, rear of garage, house, and back yard)	East

RIVER

193

C55

C2B

C1B

C38i

C65

C65

R.M. Barker Home CEC-189

Carroll Co., KY

ROAD

