

PHO 500 674

DATA SHEET

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE

FOR NPS USE ONLY
RECEIVED JUL 7 1977
DATE ENTERED JAN 5 1978

NATIONAL REGISTER OF HISTORIC PLACES INVENTORY -- NOMINATION FORM

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

1 NAME

HISTORIC
Barret House
AND/OR COMMON
Same

2 LOCATION

STREET & NUMBER
204 South Elm Street
CITY, TOWN
Henderson
STATE
Kentucky
VICINITY OF

COUNTY
Henderson
CODE
021
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT
02
CODE
101

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"/> MUSEUM
<input type="checkbox"/> STRUCTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> BOTH	<input type="checkbox"/> WORK IN PROGRESS	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCIAL
<input type="checkbox"/> SITE	PUBLIC ACQUISITION	ACCESSIBLE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATIONAL
<input type="checkbox"/> OBJECT	<input type="checkbox"/> IN PROCESS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> YES: RESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> ENTERTAINMENT
	<input type="checkbox"/> BEING CONSIDERED	<input type="checkbox"/> YES: UNRESTRICTED	<input type="checkbox"/> GOVERNMENT
		<input type="checkbox"/> NO	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRIAL
			<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY
			<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER:
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> PRIVATE RESIDENCE
			<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGIOUS
			<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENTIFIC
			<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION

4 OWNER OF PROPERTY

NAME
Oscar B. Jennings
STREET & NUMBER
204 South Elm Street
CITY, TOWN
Henderson
VICINITY OF

STATE
Kentucky

5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION

COURTHOUSE,
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.
Henderson County Courthouse
STREET & NUMBER
Courthouse Square
CITY, TOWN
Henderson
STATE
Kentucky

6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS

TITLE
Survey of Historic Sites in Kentucky (Supplement)
DATE
1974
DEPOSITORY FOR
SURVEY RECORDS
Kentucky Heritage Commission
CITY, TOWN
Frankfort
STATE
Kentucky
FEDERAL STATE COUNTY LOCAL

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

In relation to standard American interpretations of the Italian Villa form, this house is essentially conservative. The main facade is rigidly symmetrical, and the designer took little or no advantage of the corner site, that readily lends itself to picturesque compositions. However, symmetry is perhaps appropriate for a house located on a grid of city streets.

T-shaped in plan, the house sits on carefully graded terraces that emphasize its height above the street. The square entrance tower projects from the main block and is flanked by matching filigree porches of vaguely Moorish origin that contrast sharply with the massiveness of the main block. Both street facades are divided into bays and stories by a complex and subtle system of horizontals and verticals. The verticals are formed by raised pilaster strips, and the horizontals--at the cornice line of the tower, porches and main block--are formed by treating eaves, brackets and friezes as single bands of tightly-knit parts. Set into this overall grid are the windows and doors, either elliptical or round arched. The interplay between round and elliptical arches is emphasized by the shape of the hoodmolds over the windows in the main block: each is round at the crest and elliptical at the head of the window. The simple progression of openings in the tower is one opening at the first stage, two at the second and three at the third. The raised pilaster strips of the tower turn in a Lombard arcade above the second stage--an unexpected detail in a supposedly Italianate building. This Romanesque detail seems to suggest that the overall grid of horizontals and verticals refers to a Romanesque manner of wall treatment as well. The house would thus appear to be a mixture of Italianate features, Romanesque wall treatment and classical symmetry.

The interior features cross halls, a dramatic staircase in two flights, double parlors 20 feet square, and handsome woodwork of parallel moldings that sweep without interruption into elliptical door arches. Alterations made about the turn of the century include: connection of the parlors by opening up the walls of the axial corridor between them; addition of a Lincrusta dado to the stairhall, which has floorboards of alternating light and dark wood; replacement of the original mantels with Federal style mantels; and addition of a number of rooms in the angle of the "T" away from the streets.

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 checked="" 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 c. 1868

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

This imposing Italianate villa, located on Elm Street in Henderson, was built in 1868 by William T. Barret. William Barret was one of three prominent brothers who settled in Henderson and became successful tobacconists. The house was later owned by William's brother, John Henry Barret, who was a partner with his brother Alexander in a tobacco stemmery firm. J. H. Barret was also engaged in a number of other activities which aided the development of Henderson, including being a director for the construction of the Evansville, Henderson, and Nashville Railroad. In 1880, the property was deeded to J. H. Barret's son, John Henry Barret, Jr., who was a partner in the tobacco stemmery firm of John H. Barret and Co., director of the Henderson National Bank, president of the Henderson Woolen Mills, and a director of the Henderson Coal and Mining Company.

Although the treatment of masses immediately identifies this house as being primarily Italianate in style, other features--some of which are a bit surprising--render it an eclectic spirit. Such features include the Moorish filigree work of the porch, the classical use of symmetry, and the Romanesque fenestration. Adding to the mixture are the later added Lincrusta dado and Federal style mantels of the interior. Although it may be thought that the builder was unsure of what this interfusion would create, it is, in a sense, one of architectural relish. The site location, use of thin pilaster strips, and upward increasing number of tower openings combine to emphasize the verticality, but the horizontal treatment of eaves, brackets, and friezes does not allow this to get out of hand. The result is a rather fine composition.

The eldest Barret brother, and the first to settle in Henderson in 1833, was Alexander B. Barret (1811-1861). Like his brothers, A. B. Barret was a native of Louise County, Virginia. After receiving a limited education, Barret began working at the age of fourteen in the Richmond, Virginia office of his uncle who carried on an extensive tobacco trade in the U. S. and Europe. In 1833, Barret was made a partner in his uncle's firm and was placed in charge of the office's tobacco interests in Henderson, Kentucky. When his uncle's firm dissolved a few years later, Barret

9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES

Axton, W. F. Tobacco and Kentucky. Lexington: The University Press of Kentucky, 1976.

Biographical Cyclopedia of the Commonwealth of Kentucky. Philadelphia, Chicago: John M. Gresham Co., 1896.

(continued)

10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY 1 acre

UTM REFERENCES

A	<u>16</u>	<u>44781010</u>	<u>4187540</u>	B			
	ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING		ZONE	EASTING	NORTHING
C				D			

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

Kenneth Gibbs, Architectural Historian; Mary Cronan Oppel, Historian DLK:WEL

ORGANIZATION

Kentucky Heritage Commission

DATE

June 1977

STREET & NUMBER

104 Bridge Street

TELEPHONE

(502) 564-3741

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.

STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICER SIGNATURE

Cedric W. Melton

TITLE State Historic Preservation Officer

DATE

7/1/77

FOR NPS USE ONLY

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

DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ARCHAEOLOGY AND HISTORIC PRESERVATION
 ATTEST: *Chuck Ashurst*

DATE

1-5-78

KEEPER OF THE NATIONAL REGISTER

DATE

1-4-78

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Barret House

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remained in Henderson and retained the business of the original firm. In 1852, he formed a partnership with his youngest brother, John Henry Barret. A. B. Barret established tobacco stemmeries throughout Western Kentucky and owned large amounts of tobacco in Europe as well. In his time he was considered the most extensive tobacco merchant in the world. He was also the largest planter in Henderson County. At the time of Barret's death in 1861, he was considered the wealthiest citizen Kentucky had ever claimed (Starling, p. 803).

Unfortunately, very little is known about William T. Barret, the builder of the house. William Barret moved to Henderson County, Kentucky, two years after Alexander arrived. It is known that William was a tobacconist, and it is believed that he worked for his brother's firm when he first arrived. Evidently William was successful, for in 1868 he purchased a lot which adjoined the house of Governor Lazarus W. Powell (1812-1867), from Governor Powell's son. The same year he constructed the present gracious villa.

In 1878 William sold the house to his brother, John Henry Barret. J. H. Barret was born in Louisa County, Virginia in 1818. He attended the local schools and worked on his family's farm. At seventeen he moved to Henderson and worked with his brothers in the tobacco business.

In 1839, John Henry Barret married Susan D. Rankin, a native of Henderson County. At this time Barret stopped working for his brother and formed a partnership in the dry goods business with his brother-in-law, James E. Rankin, under the name Rankin & Barret. Barret continued in business for eleven years, until 1851 when the partnership was dissolved. A short time afterwards, Barret's wife died, leaving him with three children. Barret remarried a year later, Mary Augusta Haddock, a native of Livingston County.

In 1852, John Henry Barret accepted his brother Alexander's offer of a partnership in the tobacco business. Barret took an active role in the business until the death of Alexander in 1861. Alexander B. Barret left an estate amounting to between three and four million dollars, the largest known estate up until that time listed in Kentucky. The estate included a vast amount of real estate throughout the United States, stocks, bonds, notes, and unsettled accounts (Starling p. 767). As the sole executor, John Henry Barret settled the estate completely, without contest, within five years.

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Although the death of Alexander Barret brought an end to the partnership, J. H. Barret continued to operate the stemming business as the surviving partner. He was later joined in the business by his sons, John H., Jr., and James R., and his son-in-law James F. Rankin. Under this new organization, the firm of John H. Barret & Co., erected a large tobacco stemmery in Uniontown, in adjoining Union County, and in Owensboro, Daviess County. The Owensboro stemmery, operated jointly with John W. Matthews, a native of Henderson, was one of the largest in the city. Not only did the Barret firm have a strong influence on tobacco markets in this country, but in Europe as well. In 1890, at the death of his father, Barret, Jr., became the senior member in the firm.

Henderson County, located in Western Kentucky on the Ohio River, consists of rich bottomlands, ideal for growing tobacco, as are many of the neighboring counties. In fact, Henderson County has been first or second in the number of pounds of tobacco produced in the State. From 1839-1859, Kentucky was second only to Virginia in the production of tobacco in the nation. In 1865 after the Civil War, Kentucky took the lead, relinquishing its position in 1929 to North Carolina. In the late 1800s Henderson was the largest strip market in the United States with 17 stemmeries in the city and 18 in the county (Starling, p. 515). In the stemming process the tobacco was stripped, stemmed, redried and repacked in hogsheads for one or two years while it fermented (Axton, p. 50).

John Henry Barret, Jr., was also the president of the Henderson Woolen Mills, a large stockholder and director of the Henderson Cotton Mills, a director of the Henderson Coal and Mining Company, director of the Henderson National Bank, and the Ohio Valley Bank and Trust Company.

In 1863, Barret, Jr., married Henrietta Offut, a native of Shelby County (Greshum, p. 467).

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Collins, Richard. History of Kentucky. Covington: By author, 1874.

Connelley, William E. and E. M. Courter. History of Kentucky. Vol. 3. Chicago & New York: The American Historical Society, 1922.

Starling, Edmund L. History of Henderson County, Kentucky. Henderson, Kentucky: Publisher unknown, 1887.